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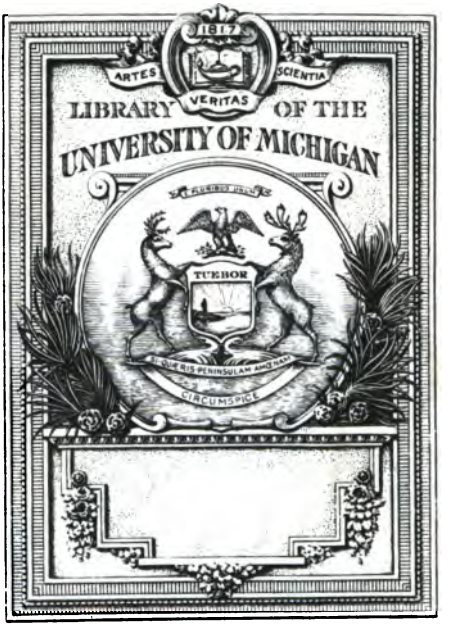
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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

THE PLAYS OF SHAKSPEARE

Much Ado About Nothing

EDITED BY

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RIVINGTONS

WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON

1890

INTRODUCTION

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING was first published in 1600 as a Quarto. The title-page runs as follows:

> Much adoe about | Nothing. | *As it hath been sundrie times publikely* | acted by the right honourable, the Lord | Chamberlaine his seruants. | *Written by William Shakespeare.* | London | Printed by V. S. for Andrew Wise, and | William Aspley. | 1600.

No second Quarto of the play, so far as we know, was printed, although contemporary allusions to the piece leave no doubt as to its great popularity. In the Folio of 1623 *Much Ado* comes sixth among the comedies, preceding, curiously enough, *Love's Labour's Lost*, of which it is, in one important point, a maturer, more finished version. The exact relation which the text of the Folio bears to that of the Quarto is doubtful. Differences of reading occur, due for the most part to mistakes of the printer; but these discrepancies are comparatively slight, and it seems safe to conclude that the Folio was printed from the Quarto. The possibility of some independent MS. copy having been used by the editors of the first Folio is elaborately discussed by Mr. P. A. Daniel, in his Introduction to the Quarto Facsimile; his general conclusion being that the Quarto, as I have just said, was the sole authority upon which the Folio editors relied.

The date of the composition of *Much Ado* can

209119

fixed with considerable certainty through the following entry in the *Stationers' Register:*

4. AUGUSTI

As you like yt / a booke
HENRY THE FFIFT / a booke
Euery man in his humour / a booke
The commedie of "muche a Doo about nothing" a booke /

} to be staied.

The year in which this entry was made is not given; but the previous entry is dated May 27, 1600, and later on in the *Register* we read, under date of August 23, 1600:

Andrew Wyse
William Aspley

Entred for their copies vnder the handes of the wardens Two bookes. the one called *Muche a Doo about nothinge.* Th[e] other *the second parte of the history of kinge HENRY the IIIJ^th^ with the humours of Sir JOHN FFALLSTAFF:* Wrytten by master *SHAKESPERE* . . xij^d

It can be taken, therefore, as beyond dispute that *Much Ado* was written before August, 1600. Meres makes no mention of the play in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598); hence we can scarcely be wrong in assigning 1599 as the year of its composition. Of internal evidence on the subject there is practically none. Some commentators, indeed, trace an allusion to Essex in the lines about "princes' favourites" (iii. 1. 9–11); but in the judgment of other editors reference is clearly made to Cecil; so that we do not advance much. Again, Hunter argues (*Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. i. pp. 227–244) that the story of Benedick and Beatrice is a comment by Shakespeare upon the efforts which were being made to induce William Herbert (the possible "W. H." of the *Sonnets*) to marry. But all this, though very clever, is the merest theorising and conjecture, and we had better

revert to our external testimony, thankful that for once the inevitable question, "When written?" can be answered with comparative certainty.

How far, in writing *Much Ado*, was Shakespeare indebted to previous writers? The interest of the play is twofold. We may fairly divide the drama into parts—into the story of Beatrice and Benedick, representing the element of comedy pure and simple; and the serious, quasi-tragic story of Hero and Claudio. It is, of course, the former for which we chiefly care. These scenes of elaborate word-fence between the two lovers, who never, never will confess their love, are in their way as perfect as anything Shakespeare ever wrote. Nowhere do we find keener characterisation, cleverer dialogue, a greater wealth of the thousand and one happy touches, the deft, quick, felicitous strokes, that make up the sum total of a work of art, and proclaim the great master. Now, so far as we know, Beatrice and Benedick are entirely creations of the poet. This portion of the play is his work, and his alone. With the story of Hero's wrongs—and this strictly, technically, is the backbone, the plot of the piece—the case stands differently. Shakespeare was careless about inventing plots. He was quite content to "convey" the dry details of some popular legend, and clothe them in the rich garb of his own inexhaustible fancy; and when the result was so admirable, when some feeble *conte* had in his hands become intense with life and interest, no one—except, perhaps, a querulous, ill-conditioned person like Greene—cared to raise the cry of plagiarism.

The Hero story in *Much Ado* illustrates Shakespeare's readiness to take advantage of the labours of others. There can be little doubt that he borrowed the story from Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques*, itself a version of Bandello's *Novelle*. Whether the *Histoires Tragiques*

had been translated into English, or whether Shakespeare used the French original, is not certain; in any case, the book was known to the dramatist, and used by him elsewhere—possibly, for instance, when he wrote *Twelfth Night*. Belleforest's tale is too long to be inserted here; the curious must consult Hazlitt's *Shakspere's Library*, vol. iii. I shall venture to borrow Staunton's quite satisfactory summary; it is to this effect:

"Don Piero of Arragon returns from a victorious campaign, and, with the gallant cavalier Timbreo di Cardona, is at Messina. Timbreo falls in love with Fenicia, the daughter of Lionato di Lionati, a gentleman of Messina, and, like Claudio in the play, courts her by proxy. He is successful in his suit, and the lovers are betrothed; but the course of true love is impeded by one Girondo, a disappointed admirer of the lady, who determines to prevent the marriage. In pursuance of this object, he insinuates to Timbreo that Fenicia is false, and offers to show him a stranger scaling her chamber window. The unhappy lover consents to watch; and at the appointed hour Girondo and a servant in the plot pass him disguised, and the latter is seen to ascend a ladder and enter the house of Lionato. In an agony of rage and jealousy, Timbreo in the morning accuses the lady of disloyalty, and rejects the alliance. Fenicia falls into a swoon; a dangerous illness supervenes; and the father, to stifle all rumours hurtful to her fame, removes her to a retired house of his brother, proclaims her death, and solemnly performs her funeral obsequies. Girondo is now struck with remorse at having 'slandered to death' a creature so innocent and beautiful. He confesses his treachery to Timbreo, and both determine to restore the reputation of the lost one, and undergo any penance her family may impose. Lionato is merciful, and requires only from Timbreo that he shall wed a lady

whom he recommends, and whose face shall be concealed till the marriage ceremony is over. The *dénouement* is obvious. Timbreo espouses the mysterious fair one, and finds in her his injured, loving, and beloved Fenicia."

Here we have all the essential elements of the plot against Hero. Observe, indeed, the very marked coincidences between the play and the novel. In both the scene is laid at Messina; in both the father of the injured bride is Lionato, or Leonato; the Don Piero of the novel suggests the Don Pedro of the comedy; and if we went through the summary just given, we should find that almost every detail finds its parallel in Shakespeare's work. To the question, therefore, "What portion of *Much Ado* is not original?" we may unhesitatingly reply that the serious part of the story is strictly a plagiarism, and that the source upon which the dramatist drew was the twenty-second *Novella* of Bandello, as translated by Belleforest in the *Histoires Tragiques*. It should be added that the idea of a servant being induced to personate her mistress, so as to deceive the lover of the latter, occurs in the story of Ariodanto and Ginevra, in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, canto v. Harrington's great translation of the *Orlando* was published in 1591; and of this particular portion of Ariosto's work two English versions had previously appeared, while a play entitled *A History of Ariodante and Geneuora* had been acted before the Queen in 1583. Further—and this exhausts the list—Spenser had told a very similar tale in the *Faerie Queene*, bk. ii. canto iv. stan. xx.–xxx. Obviously, therefore, Shakespeare could have had no difficulty in filling in his story with supplementary touches; the materials ready to hand represented an absolute embarrassment of riches.

We may note one or two points of contact between *Much Ado* and other plays of Shakespeare. Beatrice

and Benedick, to begin with, are the Rosaline and Berowne of *Love's Labour's Lost*, and time has brought to each strength and a finer wit. Hero, with her passive impotence and acquiescence when the blow falls, reminds us of a far more beautiful character, the justly self-assertive and dignified Hermione of the *Winter's Tale*. Friar Francis must have known and taken as his guide, philosopher, and friend, Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*. Probably Dogberry was a relative—scarcely brother, but still a relative—of Bottom in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Further, we have in the structure of *Much Ado* a very marked link of connection with the early plays. The piece is full of studied antithesis of character. Beatrice is set over against Hero; Benedick contrasted with Claudio: there is no possibility of mistaking the dramatist's purpose. Shakespeare employed this rather artificial device very considerably at the outset of his career as playwright. For a good instance take Rosalind and Celia in *As You Like It;* for a still better one, the leading *dramatis personæ* of the *Two Gentlemen* —the faithful Valentine and the faithless Proteus; Silvia and Julia; Speed and Launce. It is a contrast of black and white. One character possesses in a marked degree exactly those qualities which another character no less conspicuously lacks. Hence the art is obvious. In the later plays the workmanship is subtler: there is more light and shade, more complexity of interest, more balance of motives, more interdependence of qualities. Create six characters, making of them three precisely opposite pairs, and the result is inevitable; to the reader they are mere puppets, painted different colours, and worked by ingenious machinery. In real life men are not, for the most part, such exact antitheses; they are too often much of a muchness.

However, *Much Ado* is so perfect a comedy, that one

is loth to hint a fault or hesitate dislike. We may search literature for artistic creations more perfect than Beatrice and Benedick, and we shall search it in vain. They are exactly what they ought to be: the best cannot be bettered. In what an exquisite dilemma do they find themselves! an inexorable *impasse* created purely by their own conceit and dangerously facile tongues. They love each other almost from the first. Beatrice has not been on the stage two minutes before she enquires (of course with the finest assumption of indifference) after "Signor Montanto;" and Benedick soon begins to protest (and methinks he doth protest too much) that he never, never could marry such a shrew, a sufficient proof that his thoughts have turned that way. But neither can advance a step. He is "a pitiless tyrant" to the sex; a carefully-achieved reputation for misogyny must not be frittered away in an hour. She has poured ceaseless contempt and epigrams on the grotesqueness of marriage. In love's name, therefore, what can they do? A single suggestion that they have "fallen from their high estate," that the *suave mari magno* sentiment has lost its charm, and their friends will be straightway consumed with Homeric laughter, and break "odd quirks and remnants of wit" with all the relish and strange, intense joy that true friendship, and true friendship alone, can inspire. The case is desperate. And then, again, neither can be sure of the other. There may be a probability. But in such matters probabilities are the merest mockery; there *must* be certainty. Conceive Benedick making overtures to Beatrice, and then finding that there had been a mistake, that she did not care two straws for him. The humiliation would be ghastly; he would be the most pathetic figure in all literature. No; they must love, and never tell their love. Benedick's cheek may not be particularly damask, but there will concealment feed.

Beatrice may coin the finest phrases, but she will still have to say, "Heigh-ho for a husband!" And then friendship steps in as the *dea ex machina*. The knot is loosed, and subsequently tied; *et voilà tout*.

Or perhaps not quite all. To insist merely on the element of comedy in these Beatrice and Benedick scenes would be a mistake. They have their serious side: there is a something above and beyond the brilliancy of epigram, and that something is revealed to us in act iv. It is a commonplace of criticism and observation—"an accident of hourly proof"—that many men only reveal their true character under the stress of some great crisis. The test comes, the opportunity of showing what they are worth, what they can do, arrives, and nature straightway rises to the height of the occasion. We have an instance of this in *Much Ado*. For three acts Beatrice has done nothing but jest. She has proved herself the luckless possessor of a sharp wit and, worse, a sharp tongue. But she has not been particularly lovable. She has scarcely been serious for two consecutive minutes; and the keenest-sighted would not credit her with the power of strongly resenting wrong done to others. If she dropped out of the play at the end of act iii., our unhesitating and entirely erroneous verdict would be, "Clever, of course—indeed, too clever by half—but rather cynical and rather shallow, and wholly heartless." And then comes the church scene, with the cruel humiliation of "meek unconscious" Hero, and with it has come Beatrice's chance. It is here for the first time that Beatrice stands confessed in all her intense womanliness and instinctive purity. Hero has been accused; the charges brought against her have been sufficient to convince and confound almost every one. But Beatrice never hesitates. True to her friend, and firm in her knowledge of that friend's character, she flashes forth an

indignant, passionate denial that Hero can be guilty. Hero is, must be, innocent. Beatrice knows it; her heart tells her so, and the impulse of the heart, in Schiller's line, is the voice of destiny. Stamped and stained with shame in the eyes of the callous, conventional world, Hero remains, and will remain, guiltless and cruelly wronged in the eyes of Beatrice. As for the miserable lover, he must have short shrift and despatch; "Kill Claudio" sums up her view as to how he should fare. And the earnestness of Beatrice has its effect on Benedick. At first he believes the story. For him there is nothing intrinsically impossible in it. How should there be? He has always misjudged, misunderstood, and despised women. He has said to himself, like Tennyson's egoist, "Woman is the lesser man;" for him, as for the eighteenth-century cynic, "most women have no character at all." And then he meets Beatrice. To know her is to love her, and to love her is to win a nobler, truer conception of what women are; and under the spell of her splendid enthusiasm he finally reaches what she has possessed from the very first moment of the crisis; viz., belief in Hero, and utter contempt for Claudio.

Beatrice and Benedick are emphatically the protagonists of *Much Ado*, creations as artistically flawless as any that can be found in the long gallery of Shakespearean portraiture. Beside them the other *dramatis personæ* inevitably pale their ineffectual fire, Dogberry alone excepted. Hero belongs to the same type as Amelia in *Vanity Fair*—an ideal embodiment of the slightly-impossible love that thinks no evil, and knows no revenge. We are sorry that she is made to suffer such keen and almost wantonly-inflicted pain; and if the love of so hopelessly invertebrate a being as Claudio will make her happy, no one can grudge her the happiness.

Don John, in his almost motiveless malignity, reminds us a little of Edmund in *Lear*. Like Edmund, he is a bastard; and Shakespeare seems to have felt that the moral taint of birth would work itself out in a love of evil for evil's sake. Iago is a villain of the same strain. Such men say to themselves, "Evil, be thou my good"; and this natural instinct towards whatsoever things are unlovely, and of ill report, is the key to their characters. But, of course, Don John is the merest adumbration of the elaborately-developed monsters of *Othello* and *Lear*. Leonato, Antonio, Margaret—these are purely conventional figures, part of the necessary machinery of the piece, but devoid of all individuality. Their counterparts are to be found in many of the plays. They need not detain us. In fact, only one real personality remains—the heroic Dogberry. Self-conceit becomes in his person a saving grace; stupidity disgusts us with the sanity of ordinary mortals; officialism attains a dignity which even modern Germany does not know. Whenever the Watch are introduced, Dogberry dominates the scene, calmly conscious of superlative merits, a supreme embodiment of all the blundering Bumbledom of all the centuries. To say more were impertinence. No one should be asked to take his conception of Dogberry second-hand; each must think the character out for himself. On such subjects men are jealous, and resent intrusion; quite rightly.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DON PEDRO, Prince of Arragon.
DON JOHN, his bastard brother.
CLAUDIO, a young lord of Florence.
BENEDICK, a young gentleman of Padua.
LEONATO, governor of Messina.
ANTONIO, his brother.
BALTHAZAR, attendant on Don Pedro.
BORACHIO, CONRADE, } followers of Don John.
FRIAR FRANCIS.
DOGBERRY, VERGES, } Two officers.
A Sexton.
A Boy.

HERO, daughter to Leonato.
BEATRICE, niece to Leonato.
MARGARET, URSULA, } Gentlewomen attending on Hero.

Messengers, Watch, Attendants.

SCENE: *Messina.*

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Before* LEONATO'S *House.*

Enter LEONATO, HERO, *and* BEATRICE, *with a* Messenger.

LEON. I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

MESS. He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

LEON. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

MESS. But few of any sort, and none of name.

LEON. A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio. 11

MESS. Much deserved on his part and equally remembered by Don Pedro; he hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion: he hath indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

LEON. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

MESS. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much that joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness. 22

LEON. Did he break out into tears?

MESS. In great measure.

LEON. A kind overflow of kindness; there are no faces truer than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping!

BEAT. I pray you, is Signior Montanto returned from the wars or no?

MESS. I know none of that name, lady; there was none such in the army of any sort.

LEON. What is he that you ask for, niece?

HERO. My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

MESS. O, he's returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

BEAT. He set up his bills here in Messina and challenged Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt. I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he killed? for indeed I promised to eat all of his killing.

LEON. Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

MESS. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

BEAT. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it: he is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

MESS. And a good soldier too, lady.

BEAT. And a good soldier to a lady; but what is he to a lord?

MESS. A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuffed with all honourable virtues.

BEAT. It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man: but for the stuffing—well, we are all mortal.

LEON. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her; they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEAT. Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

MESS. Is't possible?

BEAT. Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

MESS. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEAT. No; an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

MESS. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

BEAT. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease; he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pounds ere he be cured.

MESS. I will hold friends with you, lady.

BEAT. Do, good friend.

LEON. You will never run mad, niece.

BEAT. No, not till a hot January.

MESS. Don Pedro is approached.

Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, *and* BALTHAZAR.

D. PEDRO. Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble; the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

LEON. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but when you depart from me, sorrow abides and happiness takes his leave.

D. PEDRO. You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

LEON. Her mother hath many times told me so.

BENE. Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

LEON. Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

D. PEDRO. You have it full, Benedick; we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself. Be happy, lady; for you are like an honourable father.

BENE. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

BEAT. I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick; nobody marks you.

BENE. What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living? 111

BEAT. Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

BENE. Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

BEAT. A dear happiness to women; they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that; I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me. 123

BENE. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratched face.

BEAT. Scratching could not make it worse, an't were such a face as yours were.

BENE. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

BEAT. A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours. 131

BENE. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, o' God's name; I have done.

BEAT. You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old.

D. PEDRO. That is the sum of all, Leonato. Signior Claudio and Signior Benedick, my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month; and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer. I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart. 142

LEON. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn. [*To* D. JOHN] Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

D. JOHN. I thank you; I am not of many words, but I thank you.

LEON. Please it your grace lead on?

D. PEDRO. Your hand, Leonato; we will go together.

[*Exeunt all except* BENEDICK *and* CLAUDIO.

CLAUD. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

BENE. I noted her not; but I looked on her.

CLAUD. Is she not a modest young lady?

BENE. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

CLAUD. No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

BENE. Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

CLAUD. Thou thinkest I am in sport; I pray thee tell me truly how thou likest her.

BENE. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?

CLAUD. Can the world buy such a jewel?

BENE. Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song?

CLAUD. In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

BENE. I can see yet without spectacles and I see no such matter; there's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you?

CLAUD. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

BENE. Is't come to this, i' faith? Hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i' faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it and sigh away Sundays. Look, Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Re-enter DON PEDRO.

D. PEDRO. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

BENE. I would your grace would constrain me to tell.

D. PEDRO. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

BENE. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but, on my allegiance, mark you this, on my allegiance. He is in love. With who? now that is your grace's part. Mark how short his answer is:—With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

CLAUD. If this were so, so were it uttered.

BENE. Like the old tale, my lord: 'it is not so, nor 't was not so, but, indeed, God forbid it should be so.' 200

CLAUD. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

D. PEDRO. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

CLAUD. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

D. PEDRO. By my troth, I speak my thought.

CLAUD. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

BENE. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

CLAUD. That I love her, I feel. 210

D. PEDRO. That she is worthy, I know.

BENE. That I neither feel how she should be loved nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake.

D. PEDRO. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

CLAUD. And never could maintain his part but in the force of his will.

BENE. That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is, for the which I may go the finer, I will live a bachelor. 226

D. PEDRO. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

BENE. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord, not with love; prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen and hang me up at the door for the sign of blind Cupid.

D. PEDRO. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

BENE. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam.

D. PEDRO. Well, as time shall try;
'In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.'

BENE. The savage bull may, but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead; and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write 'Here is good horse to hire,' let them signify under my sign 'Here you may see Benedick the married man.'

CLAUD. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad.

D. PEDRO. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

BENE. I look for an earthquake too, then.

D. PEDRO. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's: commend me to him, and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed he hath made great preparation.

BENE. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassage; and so I commit you—

CLAUD. To the tuition of God: from my house, if I had it—

D. PEDRO. The sixth of July: your loving friend, Benedick.

BENE. Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience; and so I leave you. [*Exit.*

CLAUD. My liege, your highness now may do me good.

D. PEDRO. My love is thine to teach; teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

CLAUD. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

D. PEDRO. No child but Hero; she's his only heir.
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

CLAUD. O, my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,

I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love;
But now I am return'd and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I lik'd her ere I went to wars—

D. PEDRO. Thou wilt be like a lover presently,
And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
And I will break with her and with her father,
And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

CLAUD. How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

D. PEDRO. What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity.
Look, what will serve is fit; 't is once, thou lovest,
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling to-night;
I will assume thy part in some disguise
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosom I 'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then after to her father will I break;
And the conclusion is she shall be thine.
In practice let us put it presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Room in* LEONATO'S *House.*

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO, *meeting.*

LEON. How now, brother! Where is my cousin, your son? hath he provided this music?

ANT. He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamt not of.

LEON. Are they good?

ANT. As the event stamps them; but they have a good

cover, they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: the prince discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top and instantly break with you of it.

LEON. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

ANT. A good sharp fellow; I will send for him, and question him yourself.

LEON. No, no; we will hold it as a dream till it appear itself: but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you and tell her of it. [*Enter Attendants.*] Cousins, you know what you have to do. O, I cry you mercy, friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill. Good cousin, have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The Same.*

Enter DON JOHN *and* CONRADE.

CON. What the good-year, my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

D. JOHN. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it; therefore the sadness is without limit.

CON. You should hear reason.

D. JOHN. And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

CON. If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance.

D. JOHN. I wonder that thou, being, as thou sayest thou art, born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am; I must be sad when I have cause and smile at no man's jests, eat when I have stomach and wait for no man's leisure, sleep when I am drowsy and tend on no man's business, laugh when I am merry and claw no man in his humour.

CON. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en

you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself; it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

D. JOHN. I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any; in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the meantime let me be that I am and seek not to alter me.

CON. Can you make no use of your discontent?

D. JOHN. I make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here?

Enter BORACHIO.

What news, Borachio?

BORA. I came yonder from a great supper: the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

D. JOHN. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

BORA. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

D. JOHN. Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

BORA. Even he.

D. JOHN. A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

BORA. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

D. JOHN. A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

BORA. Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference; I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

D. JOHN. Come, come, let us thither; this may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all

the glory of my overthrow; if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

CON. To the death, my lord.

D. JOHN. Let us to the great supper; their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were of my mind! Shall we go prove what's to be done?

BORA. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Hall in* LEONATO'S *House.*

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, HERO, BEATRICE, *and others.*

LEON. Was not Count John here at supper?

ANT. I saw him not.

BEAT. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after.

HERO. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

BEAT. He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick; the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

LEON. Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face—

BEAT. With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world—if he could get her good-will.

LEON. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

ANT. In faith, she's too curst.

BEAT. Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way; for it is said, 'God sends a curst cow short horns;' but to a cow too curst he sends none.

LEON. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

BEAT. Just, if he send me no husband; for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face; I had rather lie in the woollen.

LEON. You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

BEAT. What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man; and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man I am not for him: therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-herd, and lead his apes into hell.

LEON. Well, then, go you into hell?

BEAT. No, but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, with horns on his head, and say 'Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids:' so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter: for the heavens! he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

ANT. [*To* HERO] Well, niece, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

BEAT. Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy and say 'Father, as it please you.' But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy and say 'Father, as it please me.'

LEON. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

BEAT. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I 'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

LEON. Daughter, remember what I told you; if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

BEAT. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time; if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in every thing, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero; wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

LEON. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

BEAT. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by daylight.

LEON. The revellers are entering, brother; make good room. [*All put on their masks.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHAZAR, DON JOHN, BORACHIO, MARGARET, URSULA, *and others, masked.*

D. PEDRO. Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

HERO. So you walk softly and look sweetly and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

D. PEDRO. With me in your company?

HERO. I may say so, when I please. 80

D. PEDRO. And when please you to say so?

HERO. When I like your favour; for God defend the lute should be like the case!

D. PEDRO. My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

HERO. Why then your visor should be thatch'd.

D. PEDRO. Speak low, if you speak love. [*Drawing her aside.*

BALTH. Well, I would you did like me.

MARG. So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities. 90

BALTH. Which is one?

MARG. I say my prayers aloud.

BALTH. I love you the better; the hearers may cry Amen.

MARG. God match me with a good dancer!

BALTH. Amen.

MARG. And keep him out of my sight when the dance is done! Answer, clerk.

BALTH. No more words; the clerk is answered.

URS. I know you well enough; you are Signior Antonio. 101

ANT. At a word, I am not.

URS. I know you by the waggling of your head.

ANT. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

URS. You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man. Here's his dry hand up and down; you are he, you are he.

ANT. At a word, I am not.

URS. Come, come, do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he; graces will appear, and there's an end.

BEAT. Will you not tell me who told you so? 111

BENE. No, you shall pardon me.

BEAT. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

BENE. Not now.

BEAT. That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the 'Hundred Merry Tales:' well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

BENE. What's he?

BEAT. I am sure you know him well enough.

BENE. Not I, believe me. 120

BEAT. Did he never make you laugh?

BENE. I pray you, what is he?

BEAT. Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the fleet; I would he had boarded me.

BENE. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say. 131

BEAT. Do, do: he'll but break a comparison or too on me; which, peradventure not marked or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Music.*] We must follow the leaders.

BENE. In every good thing.

BEAT. Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning. [*Dance. They exeunt all except* DON JOHN, BORACHIO, *and* CLAUDIO.

D. JOHN. Sure my brother is amorous on Hero and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it. The ladies follow her and but one visor remains. 142

BORA. And that is Claudio; I know him by his bearing.

D. JOHN. Are not you Signior Benedick?

CLAUD. You know me well; I am he.

D. JOHN. Signior, you are very near my brother in his ove: he is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her: she is no equal for his birth. You may do the part of an honest man in it.

CLAUD. How know you he loves her?
D. JOHN. I heard him swear his affection.
BORA. So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.
D. JOHN. Come, let us to the banquet.
[*Exeunt* DON JOHN *and* BORACHIO.
CLAUD. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.
'T is certain so; the prince wooes for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!

Re-enter BENEDICK.

BENE. Count Claudio?
CLAUD. Yea, the same.
BENE. Come, will you go with me?
CLAUD. Whither?
BENE. Even to the next willow, about your own business, county. What fashion will you wear the garland of? about your neck, like an usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.
CLAUD. I wish him joy of her.
BENE. Why, that's spoken like an honest drovier; so they sell bullocks. But did you think the prince would have served you thus?
CLAUD. I pray you, leave me.
BENE. Ho! now you strike like the blind man; 't was the boy that stole your meat, and you 'll beat the post.
CLAUD. If it will not be, I 'll leave you. [*Exit.*
BENE. Alas, poor hurt fowl! now will he creep into sedges. But that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool! Ha? It may be I go under that title because I am merry. Yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong; I am not so reputed: it is the base, though bitter disposition of Beatrice that

puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I 'll be revenged as I may.

Re-enter DON PEDRO.

D. PEDRO. Now, signior, where's the count? did you see him?

BENE. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren: I told him, and I think I told him true, that your grace had got the good will of this young lady; and I offered him my company to a willow-tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

D. PEDRO. To be whipped! What's his fault?

BENE. The flat transgression of a school-boy, who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

D. PEDRO. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

BENE. Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his bird's nest.

D. PEDRO. I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

BENE. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

D. PEDRO. The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you; the gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

BENE. O, she misused me past the endurance of a block! an oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed; she would have

made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her; for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither: so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her.

D. PEDRO. Look, here she comes. 238

Enter CLAUDIO, BEATRICE, HERO, *and* LEONATO.

BENE. Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia, bring you the length of Prester John's foot, fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard, do you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

D. PEDRO. None, but to desire your good company.

BENE. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not; I cannot endure my Lady Tongue. [*Exit.*

D. PEDRO. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick. 252

BEAT. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile; and I gave him use for it, a double heart for his single one: marry, once before he won it of me with false dice, therefore your grace may well say I have lost it.

D. PEDRO. You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

BEAT. So I would not he should do me, my lord. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

D. PEDRO. Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad?

CLAUD. Not sad, my lord.

D. PEDRO. How then? sick?

CLAUD. Neither, my lord. 265

BEAT. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

D. PEDRO. I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be

true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false.—Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy! 274

LEON. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes; his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

BEAT. Speak, count, 't is your cue.

CLAUD. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy; I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours; I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

BEAT. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

D. PEDRO. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart. 285

BEAT. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUD. And so she doth, cousin.

BEAT. Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburnt; I may sit in a corner and cry heigh-ho for a husband!

D. PEDRO. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEAT. I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

D. PEDRO. Will you have me, lady?

BEAT. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days; your grace is too costly to wear every day. But, I beseech your grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth and no matter. 301

D. PEDRO. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

BEAT. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy!

LEON. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

BEAT. I cry you mercy, uncle. By your grace's pardon. [*Exit.*

D. PEDRO. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady. 312

LEON. There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness and waked herself with laughing.

D. PEDRO. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

LEON. O, by no means; she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

D. PEDRO. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

LEON. O Lord! my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

D. PEDRO. County Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

CLAUD. To-morrow, my lord; time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

LEON. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind.

D. PEDRO. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other. I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

LEON. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

CLAUD. And I, my lord.

D. PEDRO. And you too, gentle Hero?

HERO. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

D. PEDRO. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain, of approved valour and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The Same.*

Enter DON JOHN *and* BORACHIO.

D. JOHN. It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

BORA. Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

D. JOHN. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me; I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

BORA. Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

D. JOHN. Show me briefly how.

BORA. I think I told your lordship a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

D. JOHN. I remember.

BORA. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber-window.

D. JOHN. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

BORA. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio—whose estimation do you mightily hold up—to such a one as Hero.

D. JOHN. What proof shall I make of that?

BORA. Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato. Look you for any other issue?

D. JOHN. Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing.

BORA. Go, then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and Count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as—in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window, hear me call Margaret Hero, hear Margaret term

me Borachio; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding—for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent—and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty that jealousy shall be called assurance and all the preparation overthrown.

D. JOHN. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

BORA. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

D. JOHN. I will presently go learn their day of marriage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. LEONATO'S *Orchard.*

Enter BENEDICK.

BENE. Boy!

Enter Boy.

BOY. Signior?

BENE. In my chamber-window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard.

BOY. I am here already, sir.

BENE. I know that; but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exit* BOY.] I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love; and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turned orthography: his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I 'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till

all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour. [*Withdraws.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and* LEONATO, *followed by* BALTHAZAR *and* Musicians.

D. PEDRO. Come, shall we hear this music?
CLAUD. Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is,
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!
D. PEDRO. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?
CLAUD. O, very well, my lord; the music ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth.
D. PEDRO. Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again.
BALTH. O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander music any more than once.
D. PEDRO. It is the witness still of excellency
To put a strange face on his own perfection.
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.
BALTH. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing;
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit
To her he thinks not worthy; yet he wooes,
Yet will he swear he loves.
D. PEDRO. Now, pray thee, come;
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.
BALTH. Note this before my notes;
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.
D. PEDRO. Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note, notes, forsooth, and nothing. [*Music.*
BENE. Now, divine air! now is his soul ravished! Is it not strange that sheeps' guts should hale souls out of men's bodies? Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

THE SONG.

BALTH. Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never;

Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, etc.

D. PEDRO. By my troth, a good song.

BALTH. And an ill singer, my lord.

D. PEDRO. Ha, no, no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

BENE. An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him; and I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief! I had as lief have heard the night-raven, come what plague could have come after it.

D. PEDRO. Yea, marry, dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music; for to-morrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window.

BALTH. The best I can, my lord.

D. PEDRO. Do so; farewell. [*Exit* BALTH.] Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of to-day, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

CLAUD. O, ay: stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

LEON. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

BENE. Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

LEON. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it but that she loves him with an enraged affection: it is past the infinite of thought.

D. PEDRO. May be she doth but counterfeit.

CLAUD. Faith, like enough.

LEON. O God, counterfeit! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

D. PEDRO. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

CLAUD. Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

LEON. What effects, my lord? She will sit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

CLAUD. She did, indeed.

D. PEDRO. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me; I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

LEON. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

BENE. I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it; knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

CLAUD. He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up.

D. PEDRO. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

LEON. No, and swears she never will; that's her torment.

CLAUD. 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: "Shall I," says she, "that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?"

LEON. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ a sheet of paper: my daughter tells us all.

CLAUD. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

LEON. O, when she had writ it she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: "I measure him," says she, "by my own spirit: for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should."

CLAUD. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, cries, "O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!"

LEON. She doth indeed; my daughter says so: and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her that my daughter is sometime afeard she will do a desperate outrage to herself; it is very true.

D. PEDRO. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

CLAUD. To what end? He would but make a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

D. PEDRO. An he should, it were an alms to hang him. She's an excellent sweet lady; and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

CLAUD. And she is exceeding wise.

D. PEDRO. In every thing but in loving Benedick.

LEON. O, my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

D. PEDRO. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have daffed all other respects and made her half myself. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

LEON. Were it good, think you?

CLAUD. Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die if he love her not, and she will die ere she make her love known, and she will die, if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

D. PEDRO. She doth well; if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit.

CLAUD. He is a very proper man.

D. PEDRO. He hath indeed a good outward happiness.

CLAUD. Fore God, and, in my mind, very wise.

D. PEDRO. He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.

LEON. And I take him to be valiant.

D. PEDRO. As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear.

LEON. If he do fear God, he must necessarily keep peace: if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

D. PEDRO. And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love?

CLAUD. Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out with good counsel.

LEON. Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

D. PEDRO. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter; let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

LEON. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

CLAUD. If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

D. PEDRO. Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb-show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner. 203

[*Exeunt* DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and* LEONATO.

BENE. [*Coming forward.*] This can be no trick; the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady; it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry: I must not seem proud; happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness: and virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot reprove it: and wise, but for loving me; by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage; but does not the appetite alter? a man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady; I do spy some marks of love in her. 227

Enter BEATRICE.

BEAT. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENE. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEAT. I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.

BENE. You take pleasure then in the message?

BEAT. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior; fare you well. [*Exit.*

BENE. Ha! "Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner;" there's a double meaning in that. "I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me;" that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. LEONATO'S *Orchard.*

Enter HERO, MARGARET, *and* URSULA.

HERO. Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the prince and Claudio:
Whisper her ear and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard and our whole discourse
Is all of her; say that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honeysuckles, ripen'd by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter, like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it: there will she hide her,
To listen our purpose. This is thy office;
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

MARG. I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently. [*Exit.*

HERO. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick.
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit;
My talk to thee must be how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter

Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

Enter BEATRICE, *behind.*

Now begin;
For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.
URSULA. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait;
So angle we for Beatrice, who even now
Is couched in the woodbine coverture.
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.
HERO. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.
[*Approaching the bower.*
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
I know her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.
URS. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?
HERO. So says the prince and my new-trothed lord.
URS. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?
HERO. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.
URS. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full as fortunate a bed
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?
HERO. O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But Nature never fram'd a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice;
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly that to her
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared.
URS. Sure, I think so;
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

HERO. Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
But she would spell him backward: if fair-fac'd,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,
Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed;
If low, an agate very vilely cut;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out,
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.
URS. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.
HERO. No, not to be so odd and from all fashions
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable;
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air; O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly;
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.
URS. Yet tell her of it; hear what she will say.
HERO. No; rather I will go to Benedick
And counsel him to fight against his passion.
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with; one doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.
URS. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment—
Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is priz'd to have—as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.
HERO. He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.
URS. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy; Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument, and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.
HERO. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.
URS. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.
When are you married, madam?
HERO. Why, every day, to-morrow. Come, go in;

I 'll show thee some attires, and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.
URS. She 's lim'd, I warrant you ; we have caught her, madam.
HERO. If it proves so, then loving goes by haps ;
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.
[*Exeunt* HERO *and* URSULA.
BEAT. [*Coming forward.*] What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on ; I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand :
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band ;
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A Room in* LEONATO'S *House.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, *and* LEONATO.

D. PEDRO. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.
CLAUD. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.
D. PEDRO. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company ; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth: he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him. He hath a heart as sound as a bell and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinks his tongue speaks.
BENE. Gallants, I am not as I have been.
LEON. So say I ; methinks you are sadder.
CLAUD. I hope he be in love.
D. PEDRO. Hang him, truant! there 's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touched with love; if he be sad, he wants money.
BENE. I have the toothache.

D. PEDRO. Draw it.

BENE. Hang it!

CLAUD. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

D. PEDRO. What! sigh for the toothache?

LEON. Where is but a humour or a worm?

BENE. Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it.

CLAUD. Yet say I, he is in love.

D. PEDRO. There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises; as to be a Dutchman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow, or in the shape of two countries at once, as a German from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is.

CLAUD. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: he brushes his hat o' mornings; what should that bode?

D. PEDRO. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

CLAUD. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him, and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

LEON. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

D. PEDRO. Nay, he rubs himself with civet; can you smell him out by that?

CLAUD. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.

D. PEDRO. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

CLAUD. And when was he wont to wash his face?

D. PEDRO. Yea, or to paint himself? for the which, I hear what they say of him.

CLAUD. Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string and now governed by stops.

D. PEDRO. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him; conclude, conclude he is in love.

CLAUD. Nay, but I know who loves him.

D. PEDRO. That would I know too; I warrant, one that knows him not.

CLAUD. Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

D. PEDRO. She shall be buried with her face upwards.

BENE. Yet is this no charm for the toothache. Old signior, walk aside with me; I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear. [*Exeunt* BENEDICK *and* LEONATO.

D. PEDRO. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

CLAUD. 'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

Enter DON JOHN.

D. JOHN. My lord and brother, God save you!

D. PEDRO. Good den, brother.

D. JOHN. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

D. PEDRO. In private?

D. JOHN. If it please you: yet Count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of concerns him.

D. PEDRO. What's the matter?

D. JOHN. [*To* CLAUDIO.] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

D. PEDRO. You know he does.

D. JOHN. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

CLAUD. If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

D. JOHN. You may think I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well, and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage—surely suit ill spent and labour ill bestowed.

D. PEDRO. Why, what's the matter?

D. JOHN. I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shortened, for she has been too long a talking of, the lady is disloyal.

CLAUD. Who? Hero?

D. JOHN. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

CLAUD. Disloyal?

D. JOHN. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say she were worse: think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant; go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered, even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

CLAUD. May this be so?

D. PEDRO. I will not think it.

D. JOHN. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly.

CLAUD. If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

D. PEDRO. And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

D. JOHN. I will disparage her no farther till you are my witnesses; bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

D. PEDRO. O day untowardly turned!

CLAUD. O mischief strangely thwarting! 120

D. JOHN. O plague right well prevented! so will you say when you have seen the sequel. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A street.*

Enter DOGBERRY *and* VERGES *with the* Watch.

DOG. Are you good men and true?

VERG. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

DOG. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

VERG. Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

DOG. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

FIRST WATCH. Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacole; for they can write and read. 11

DOG. Come hither, neighbour Seacole. God hath blessed you with a good name; to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature.

SEC. WATCH. Both which, master constable—

DOG. You have; I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity.

You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

SEC. WATCH. How if a' will not stand?

DOG. Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of a knave.

VERG. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

DOG. True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets; for for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

WATCH. We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

DOG. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only, have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid them that are drunk get them to bed.

WATCH. How if they will not?

DOG. Why, then, let them alone till they are sober; if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

WATCH. Well, sir.

DOG. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

WATCH. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

DOG. Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.

VERG. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

DOG. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

VERG. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

WATCH. How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

DOG. Why, then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying; for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats.

VERG. 'T is very true.

DOG. This is the end of the charge: you, constable, are to present the prince's own person; if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

VERG. Nay, by 'r lady, that I think a' cannot.

DOG. Five shillings to one on 't, with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him: marry, not without the prince be willing; for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

VERG. By 'r lady, I think it be so.

DOG. Ha, ha, ha! Well, masters, good night. An there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own; and good night. Come, neighbour.

WATCH. Well, masters, we hear our charge; let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

DOG. One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu; be vigitant, I beseech you.

[*Exeunt* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES.

Enter BORACHIO *and* CONRADE.

BORA. What, Conrade!

WATCH. [*Aside*] Peace! stir not.

BORA. Conrade, I say!

CON. Here, man; I am at thy elbow.

BORA. Mass, and my elbow itched; I thought there would a scab follow.

CON. I will owe thee an answer for that; and now forward with thy tale.

BORA. Stand thee close, then, under this pent-house, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

WATCH. [*Aside*] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

BORA. Therefore know I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

CON. Is it possible that any villany should be so dear?

BORA. Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villany should be so rich; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

CON. I wonder at it.

BORA. That shows thou art unconfirmed. Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

CON. Yes, it is apparel.

BORA. I mean, the fashion.

CON. Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

BORA. Tush! I may as well say the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

WATCH. [*Aside*] I know that Deformed; a' has been a vile thief this seven year: a' goes up and down like a gentleman. I remember his name.

BORA. Didst thou not hear somebody?

CON. No; 't was the vane on the house.

BORA. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily a' turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometime fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting, sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church-window, sometime like the shaven Hercules in the smirched worm-eaten tapestry.

CON. All this I see; and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

BORA. Not so, neither: but know that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero; she leans me out at her mistress's chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night,—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

CON. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

BORA. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret: and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villany, which did confirm any slander that Don John

had made, away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er-night and send her home again without a husband.

FIRST WATCH. We charge you, in the prince's name, stand!

SECOND WATCH. Call up the right master constable. We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

FIRST WATCH. And one Deformed is one of them. I know him; a' wears a lock.

CON. Masters, masters—

SECOND WATCH. You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

CON. Masters—

FIRST WATCH. Never speak; we charge you, let us obey [illegible] with us.

[illegible] We are [illegible]e to prove a goodly commodity, [illegible]se men's bills.

[illegible]n question, I warrant you. Come, [illegible] you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. HERO'S *Apartment.*

Enter HERO, MARGARET, *and* URSULA.

HERO. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

URS. I will, lady.

HERO. And bid her come hither.

URS. Well. [*Exit*

MARG. Troth, I think your other rabato were better.

HERO. No, pray thee, good Meg, I 'll wear this.

MARG. By my troth, 's not so good; and I warrant your cousin will say so.

HERO. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another; I 'll wear none but this.

MARG. I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner; and your gown's a most rare fashion, i' faith. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

HERO. O, that exceeds, they say.

MARG. By my troth, 's but a night-gown in respect of yours: cloth o' gold, and cuts, and laced with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts round, underborne with a bluish tinsel; but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

HERO. God give me joy to wear it! for my heart is exceeding heavy.

MARG. 'T will be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

HERO. Fie upon thee! art not ashamed?

MARG. Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, "saving your reverence, a husband:" an bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody; is there any harm in "the heavier for a husband"? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: ask my Lady Beatrice else; here she comes.

Enter BEATRICE.

HERO. Good morrow, coz.

BEAT. Good morrow, sweet Hero.

HERO. Why, how now? do you speak in the sick tune?

BEAT. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

MARG. Clap 's into "Light o' love;" that goes without a burden: do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

BEAT. Yea, light o' love, with your heels! then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.

MARG. O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

BEAT. 'T is almost five o'clock, cousin; 't is time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill; heigh-ho!

MARG. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

BEAT. For the letter that begins them all, H.

MARG. Well, and you be not turned Turk, there 's no more sailing by the star.

BEAT. What means the fool, trow?

MARG. Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

HERO. These gloves the count sent me; they are an excellent perfume.

BEAT. I am stuffed, cousin; I cannot smell.

MARG. Stuffed! there's goodly catching of cold.

BEAT. O, God help me! God help me! how long have you professed apprehension?

MARG. Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely?

BEAT. It is not seen enough, you should wear it in your cap. By my troth, I am sick.

MARG. Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart; it is the only thing for a qualm.

HERO. There thou prickest her with a thistle.

BEAT. Benedictus! why Benedictus? you have some moral in this Benedictus.

MARG. Moral! no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant plain holy-thistle. You may think perchance that I think you are in love; nay, by 'r lady; I am not such a fool to think what I list, nor I list not to think what I can, nor indeed I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man; he swore he would never marry, and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted I know not, but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

BEAT. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

MARG. Not a false gallop.

Enter URSULA.

URS. Madam, withdraw; the prince, the count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

HERO. Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Another Room in* LEONATO'S *House.*

Enter LEONATO, *with* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES.

LEON. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

DOG. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that decerns you nearly.

LEON. Brief, I pray you; for you see it is a busy time with me.

DOG. Marry, this it is, sir.

VERG. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

LEON. What is it, my good friends?

DOG. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

VERG. Yes, I thank God I am as honest as any man living that is an old man and no honester than I.

DOG. Comparisons are odorous; palabras, neighbour Verges.

LEON. Neighbours, you are tedious.

DOG. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find it in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

LEON. All thy tediousness on me, ah?

DOG. Yea, an 't were a thousand pound more than 't is; for I hear as good exclamation on your worship as of any man in the city; and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

VERG. And so am I.

LEON. I would fain know what you have to say.

VERG. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

DOG. A good old man, sir; he will be talking: as they say, when the age is in, the wit is out. God help us! it is a world to see. Well said, i' faith, neighbour Verges: well, God 's a good man; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul, i' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread; but God is to be worshipped; all men are not alike; alas, good neighbour!

LEON. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

DOG. Gifts that God gives.

LEON. I must leave you.

DOG. One word, sir: our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

LEON. Take their examination yourself and bring it me; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

DOG. It shall be suffigance.

LEON. Drink some wine ere you go. Fare you well.

Enter a Messenger.

MESS. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

LEON. I 'll wait upon them ; I am ready.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO *and* Messenger.

DOG. Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacole ; bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol : we are now to examine those men.

VERG. And we must do it wisely.

DOG. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you : here 's that shall drive some of them to a non-come : only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the gaol. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A Church.*

Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, LEONATO, FRIAR FRANCIS, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, BEATRICE, *and* Attendants.

LEON. Come, Friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

FRIAR. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady.

CLAUD. No.

LEON. To be married to her; friar, you come to marry her.

FRIAR. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count.

HERO. I do.

FRIAR. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

CLAUD. Know you any, Hero?

HERO. None, my lord.

FRIAR. Know you any, count?

LEON. I dare make his answer, none.

CLAUD. O, what men dare do! what men may do!
what men daily do, not knowing what they do!
BENE. How now! interjections? Why, then, some be
of laughing, as, ah, ha, he!
CLAUD. Stand thee by, friar. Father, by your leave:
Will you with free and unconstrained soul
Give me this maid, your daughter?
LEON. As freely, son, as God did give her me.
CLAUD. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?
D. PEDRO. Nothing, unless you render her again.
CLAUD. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.
There, Leonato, take her back again:
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!
O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.
LEON. What do you mean, my lord?
CLAUD. Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.
LEON. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity—
CLAUD. I know what you would say. No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity and comely love.
HERO. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?
CLAUD. Out on thy seeming! I will write against it:
You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus.
HERO. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?
LEON. Sweet prince, why speak not you?
D. PEDRO. What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about

To link my dear friend to a common wanton.
LEON. Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
D. JOHN. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
BENE. This looks not like a nuptial.
HERO. True! O God!
CLAUD. Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? are our eyes our own?
LEON. All this is so; but what of this, my lord?
CLAUD. Let me but move one question to your daughter;
And, by that fatherly and kindly power
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.
LEON. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.
HERO. O, God defend me! how am I beset!—
What kind of catechising call you this?
CLAUD. To make you answer truly to your name.
HERO. Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?
CLAUD. Marry, that can Hero;
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.
HERO. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.
D. PEDRO. Why, then are you no maiden. Leonato,
I am sorry you must hear: upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.
D. JOHN. Fie, fie! they are not to be nam'd, my lord,
Not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language
Without offence to utter them. Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.
CLAUD. O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been plac'd
About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell.
Thou pure impiety and impious purity!
For thee I 'll lock up all the gates of love,

And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.
LEON. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?
[HERO *swoons.*
BEAT. Why, how now, cousin! wherefore sink you down?
D. JOHN. Come, let us go. These things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.
[*Exeunt* DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, *and* CLAUDIO.
BENE. How doth the lady?
BEAT. Dead, I think. Help, uncle!
Hero! why Hero! Uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar!
LEON. O Fate! take not away thy heavy hand.
Death is the fairest cover for her shame
That may be wish'd for.
BEAT. How now, cousin Hero!
FRIAR. Have comfort, lady.
LEON. Dost thou look up?
FRIAR. Yea, wherefore should she not?
LEON. Wherefore! Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?
Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?
Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not with charitable hand
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,
Who smirched thus and mir'd with infamy,
I might have said "No part of it is mine;
This shame derives itself from unknown loins?"
But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
And mine that I was proud on, mine so much
That I myself was to myself not mine,
Valuing of her—why, she, O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again.

BENE. Sir, sir, be patient.
For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder,
I know not what to say.
BEAT. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!
BENE. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?
BEAT. No, truly not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.
LEON. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who lov'd her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her! let her die.
FRIAR. Hear me a little; for I have only been
Silent so long and given way unto
This course of fortune....
By noting of the lady I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness bear away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool;
Trust not my reading nor my observations,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenour of my book; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some biting error.
LEON. Friar, it cannot be.
Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left
Is that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury; she not denies it:
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?
FRIAR. Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?
HERO. They know that do accuse me; I know none:
If I know more of any man alive
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy! O my father,
Prove you that any man with me convers'd
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!

FRIAR. There is some strange misprision in the princes.
BENE. Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villanies.
LEON. I know not. If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find awak'd, in such a kind,
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
Ability in means and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.
FRIAR. Pause awhile,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead:
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed;
Maintain a mourning ostentation,
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.
LEON. What shall become of this? what will this do?
FRIAR. Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; that is some good:
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pitied, and excus'd
Of every hearer; for it so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination,
And every lovely organ of her life

Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving, delicate, and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she liv'd indeed; then shall he mourn,
If ever love had interest in his liver,
And wish he had not so accused her,
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy;
And if it sort not well, you may conceal her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

BENE. Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you;
And though you know my inwardness and love
Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body.

LEON. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me.

FRIAR. 'T is well consented: presently away;
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.
Come, lady, die to live: this wedding-day
Perhaps is but prolong'd; have patience and endure.

[*Exeunt all but* BENEDICK *and* BEATRICE.

BENE. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

BEAT. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

BENE. I will not desire that.

BEAT. You have no reason; I do it freely.

BENE. Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

BEAT. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her!

BENE. Is there any way to show such friendship?

BEAT. A very even way, but no such friend.

BENE. May a man do it?

BEAT. It is a man's office, but not yours.

BENE. I do love nothing in the world so well as you; is not that strange?

BEAT. As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

BENE. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

BEAT. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

BENE. I will swear by it that you love me; and I will make him eat it that says I love not you. 271

BEAT. Will you not eat your word?

BENE. With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I love thee.

BEAT. Why, then, God forgive me!

BENE. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

BEAT. You have stayed me in a happy hour; I was about to protest I loved you.

BENE. And do it with all thy heart.

BEAT. I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest. 281

BENE. Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

BEAT. Kill Claudio.

BENE. Ha! not for the wide world.

BEAT. You kill me to deny it. Farewell.

BENE. Tarry, sweet Beatrice. [*Holding her.*

BEAT. I am gone, though I am here; there is no love in you. Nay, I pray you, let me go.

BENE. Beatrice—

BEAT. In faith, I will go. 290

BENE. We'll be friends first.

BEAT. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.

BENE. Is Claudio thine enemy?

BEAT. Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! What, bear her in hand until they come to take hands; and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour. O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

BENE. Hear me, Beatrice. 301

BEAT. Talk with a man out at a window! A proper saying!

BENE. Nay, but, Beatrice—

BEAT. Sweet Hero! She is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

BENE. Beat—

BEAT. Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect; a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too; he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving. 316

BENE. Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

BEAT. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

BENE. Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

BEAT. Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

BENE. Enough, I am engaged; I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so I leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin; I must say she is dead: and so, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Prison.*

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and* Sexton, *in gowns; and the* Watch, *with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO.

DOG. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

VERG. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

SEX. Which be the malefactors?

DOG. Marry, that am I and my partner.

VERG. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

SEX. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

DOG. Yea, marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend? 10

BORA. Borachio.

DOG. Pray, write down, Borachio. Yours, sirrah?

CON. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

DOG. Write down, master gentleman Conrade. Masters, do you serve God?

CON. } Yea, sir, we hope.
BORA. }

DOG. Write down, that they hope they serve God: and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

CON. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

DOG. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear: sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

BORA. Sir, I say to you we are none.

DOG. Well, stand aside. Fore God, they are both in a tale. Have you writ down, that they are none?

SEX. Master constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

DOG. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way. Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

FIRST WATCH. This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

DOG. Write down Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

BORA. Master constable—

DOG. Pray thee, fellow, peace; I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

SEX. What heard you him say else?

SECOND WATCH. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

DOG. Flat burglary as ever was committed.

VERG. Yea, by the mass, that it is.

SEX. What else, fellow?

FIRST WATCH. And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

DOG. O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

SEX. What else?

WATCH. This is all.

SEX. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, upon the grief of this suddenly died. Master con-

stable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's; I will go before and show him their examination. [*Exit.*

DOG. Come, let them be opinioned. 62

VERG. Let them be in the hands—

CON. Off, coxcomb!

DOG. God's my life, where's the sexton? let him write down the prince's officer coxcomb. Come, bind them. Thou naughty varlet!

CON. Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

DOG. Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my years? O that he were here to write me down an ass! But, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow, and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a household-holder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina, and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns and every thing handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had been writ down an ass! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Before* LEONATO'S *House.*

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

ANT. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;
And 't is not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

LEON. I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience; 10
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form:

If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
Bid sorrow wag, cry "hem!" when he should groan,
Patch grief with proverbs, make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man: for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptial medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charm ache with air and agony with words.
No, no; 't is all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel;
My griefs cry louder than advertisement.

ANT. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

LEON. I pray thee, peace. I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently,
However they have writ the style of gods
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

ANT. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those that do offend you suffer too.

LEON. There thou speak'st reason; nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied,
And that shall Claudio know; so shall the prince
And all of them that thus dishonour her.

ANT. Here comes the prince and Claudio hastily.

Enter DON PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO.

D. PEDRO. Good den, good den.

CLAUD. Good day to both of you.

LEON. Hear you, my lords—

D. PEDRO. We have some haste, Leonato.

LEON. Some haste, my lord! well, fare you well, my lord:
Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.

D. PEDRO. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

ANT. If he could right himself with quarrelling,
Some of us would lie low.

CLAUD. Who wrongs him?

LEON. Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou!—
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.
CLAUD. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear;
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.
LEON. Tush, tush, man, never fleer and jest at me;
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,
As under privilege of age to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me
That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by,
And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child:
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors;
O, in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villany!
CLAUD. My villany?
LEON. Thine, Claudio; thine, I say.
D. PEDRO. You say not right, old man.
LEON. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
Despite his nice fence and his active practice,
His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.
CLAUD. Away! I will not have to do with you.
LEON. Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child;
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.
ANT. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:
But that's no matter; let him kill one first;
Win me and wear me; let him answer me.
Come, follow me, boy; come, sir boy, come, follow me:
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.
LEON. Brother—
ANT. Content yourself. God knows I lov'd my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
That dare as well answer a man indeed
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue—

Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!
LEON. Brother Antony—
ANT. Hold you content. What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple—
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boys,
That lie and cog and flout, deprave and slander,
Go antiely, show outward hideousness,
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst;
And this is all. 99
LEON. But, brother Antony—
ANT. Come, 't is no matter:
Do not you meddle; let me deal in this.
D. PEDRO. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death;
But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true and very full of proof.
LEON. My lord, my lord—
D. PEDRO. I will not hear you.
LEON. No? Come, brother, away! I will be heard.
ANT. And shall, or some of us will smart for it. 109
[*Exeunt* LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.
D. PEDRO. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

Enter BENEDICK.

CLAUD. Now, signior, what news?
BENE. Good day, my lord.
D. PEDRO. Welcome, signior: you are almost come to part almost a fray.
CLAUD. We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.
D. PEDRO. Leonato and his brother. What thinkest thou? Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.
BENE. In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both. 121
CLAUD. We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?
BENE. It is in my scabbard; shall I draw it?
D. PEDRO. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?
CLAUD. Never any did so, though very many have been

beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us.

D. PEDRO. As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry?

CLAUD. What, courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

BENE. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject.

CLAUD. Nay, then, give him another staff; this last was broke cross.

D. PEDRO. By this light, he changes more and more; I think he be angry indeed.

CLAUD. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

BENE. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

CLAUD. God bless me from a challenge!

BENE. [*Aside to* CLAUDIO] You are a villain; I jest not: I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavily on you. Let me hear from you.

CLAUD. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

D. PEDRO. What, a feast, a feast?

CLAUD. I' faith, I thank him: he hath bid me to a calf's head and a capon; the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught. Shall I not find a woodcock too?

BENE. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

D. PEDRO. I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day. I said, thou hadst a fine wit: "True," said she, "a fine little one." "No," said I, "a great wit:" "Right," says she, "a great gross one." "Nay," said I, "a good wit:" "Just," said she, "it hurts nobody." "Nay," said I, "the gentleman is wise:" "Certain," said she, "a wise gentleman." "Nay," said I, "he hath the tongues:" "That I believe," said she, "for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue; there's two tongues." Thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues; yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

CLAUD. For the which she wept heartily and said she cared not.

D. PEDRO. Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an

if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly: the old man's daughter told us all.

CLAUD. All, all; and, moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

D. PEDRO. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

CLAUD. Yea, and text underneath, "Here dwells Benedick the married man?"

BENE. Fare you well, boy; you know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour; you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you; I must discontinue your company: your brother the bastard is fled from Messina; you have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet; and, till then, peace be with him. [*Exit.*

D. PEDRO. He is in earnest.

CLAUD. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

D. PEDRO. And hath challenged thee.

CLAUD. Most sincerely.

D. PEDRO. What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off his wit!

CLAUD. He is then a giant to an ape; but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

D. PEDRO. But, soft you, let me be; pluck up, my heart, and be sad. Did he not say, my brother was fled?

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, *and the* Watch, *with* CONRADE *and* BORACHIO.

DOG. Come you, sir; if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite, once you must be looked to.

D. PEDRO. How now? two of my brother's men bound! Borachio one!

CLAUD. Hearken after their offence, my lord.

D. PEDRO. Officers, what offence have these men done?

DOG. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

D. PEDRO. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

CLAUD. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.

D. PEDRO. Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: what's your offence?

BORA. Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine answer; do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who in the night overheard me confessing to this man how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero, how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments, how you disgraced her when you should marry her. My villany they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

D. PEDRO. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

CLAUD. I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

D. PEDRO. But did my brother set thee on to this?

BORA. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

D. PEDRO. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery; And fled he is upon this villany.

CLAUD. Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear In the rare semblance that I lov'd it first.

DOG. Come, bring away the plaintiffs; by this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter; and, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

VERG. Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

Re-enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO, *with the* Sexton.

LEON. Which is the villain? let me see his eyes, That, when I note another man like him, I may avoid him; which of these is he?

BORA. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

LEON. Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?
BORA. Yea, even I alone.
LEON. No, not so, villain, thou beliest thyself:
Here stand a pair of honourable men;
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death:
Record it with your high and worthy deeds;
'T was bravely done, if you bethink you of it.
CLAUD. I know not how to pray your patience;
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself;
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not
But in mistaking.
D. PEDRO. By my soul, nor I;
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he 'll enjoin me to.
LEON. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live;
That were impossible: but, I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here
How innocent she died; and if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb
And sing it to her bones, sing it to-night.
To-morrow morning come you to my house,
And since you could not be my son-in-law,
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that 's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us;
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.
CLAUD. O noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer; and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.
LEON. To-morrow then I will expect your coming;
To-night I take my leave. This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I believe was pack'd in all this wrong,
Hir'd to it by your brother.
BORA. No, by my soul, she was not,
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me,

But always hath been just and virtuous
In any thing that I do know by her.

DOG. Moreover, sir, which indeed is not under white and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass; I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment. And also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed; they say he wears a key in his ear and a lock hanging by it, and borrows money in God's name, the which he hath used so long and never paid that now men grow hard-hearted and will lend nothing for God's sake: pray you, examine him upon that point. 301

LEON. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

DOG. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise God for you.

LEON. There's for thy pains.

DOG. God save the foundation!

LEON. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

DOG. I leave an arrant knave with your worship; which I beseech your worship to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship! I wish your worship well; God restore you to health! I humbly give you leave to depart: and if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it! Come, neighbour. 314

[*Exeunt* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES.

LEON. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

ANT. Farewell, my lords; we look for you to-morrow.

D. PEDRO. We will not fail.

CLAUD. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

LEON. [*To the* Watch] Bring you these fellows on.
We'll talk with Margaret,
How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.

[*Exeunt, severally.*

SCENE II. LEONATO'S *Orchard.*

Enter BENEDICK *and* MARGARET, *meeting.*

BENE. Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

MARG. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

BENE. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living

shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

MARG. To have no man come over me! why, shall I always keep below stairs?

BENE. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches.

MARG. And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

BENE. A most manly wit, Margaret; it will not hurt a woman; and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice: I give thee the bucklers.

MARG. Give us the swords; we have bucklers of our own.

BENE. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

MARG. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs.

BENE. And therefore will come. [*Exit* MARGARET.

[*Sings*] The god of love,
That sits above,
And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve—

I mean in singing; but in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole bookful of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self in love. Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried: I can find out no rhyme to "lady" but "baby," an innocent rhyme; for "scorn," "horn," a hard rhyme; for "school," "fool," a babbling rhyme; very ominous endings: no, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.

Enter BEATRICE.

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I called thee?

BEAT. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

BENE. O, stay but till then!

BEAT. "Then" is spoken; fare you well now: and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came; which is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

BENE. Only foul words ; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

BEAT. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome ; therefore I will depart unkissed.

BENE. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge ; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

BEAT. For them all together ; which maintained so politic a state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

BENE. Suffer love ! a good epithet ! I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

BEAT. In spite of your heart, I think ; alas, poor heart ! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours ; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

BENE. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

BEAT. It appears not in this confession ; there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

BENE. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

BEAT. And how long is that, think you?

BENE. Question : why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum ; therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy ; and now tell me, how doth your cousin?

BEAT. Very ill.

BENE. And how do you?

BEAT. Very ill too.

BENE. Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter URSULA.

URS. Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil at home : it is proved my Lady Hero hath been

falsely accused, the prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently?

BEAT. Will you go hear this news, signior?

BENE. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *A Church.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and three or four with tapers.*

CLAUD. Is this the monument of Leonato?

A LORD. It is, my lord.

CLAUD. [*Reading out of a scroll*]

Done to death by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies;
Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
Gives her fame which never dies.
So the life that died with shame
Lives in death with glorious fame.
Hang thou there upon the tomb, [*Affixing it.*
Praising her when I am dumb.

Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

SONG.

Pardon, goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn and yield your dead;
Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily.

CLAUD. Now, unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

D. PEDRO. Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us; fare you well.

CLAUD. Good morrow, masters; each his several way.
D. PEDRO. Come, let us hence, and put on other weed;
And then to Leonato's we will go.
CLAUD. And Hymen now with luckier issue speed
Than this for whom we render'd up this woe! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A Room in* LEONATO'S *House.*

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, MARGARET, URSULA, FRIAR FRANCIS, *and* HERO.

FRIAR. Did I not tell you she was innocent?
LEON. So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her
Upon the error that you heard debated;
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.
ANT. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.
BENE. And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.
LEON. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd.
[*Exeunt* Ladies.
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me. You know your office, brother:
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.
ANT. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.
BENE. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.
FRIAR. To do what, signior?
BENE. To bind me, or undo me; one of them.
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.
LEON. That eye my daughter lent her; 't is most true.
BENE. And I do with an eye of love requite her.
LEON. The sight whereof I think you had from me,
From Claudio, and the prince; but what 's your will?
BENE. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical;
But, for my will, my will is your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the state of honourable marriage,
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

LEON. My heart is with your liking.
FRIAR. And my help.
Here comes the prince and Claudio.

Enter DON PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO, *and two or three others.*

D. PEDRO. Good morrow to this fair assembly.
LEON. Good morrow, prince; good morrow, Claudio:
We here attend you. Are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?
CLAUD. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.
LEON. Call her forth, brother; here's the friar ready.
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
D. PEDRO. Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what 's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?
CLAUD. I think he thinks upon the savage bull.
Tush, fear not, man; we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee,
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

Re-enter ANTONIO, *with the* Ladies *masked.*

Which is the lady I must seize upon?
ANT. This same is she, and I do give you her.
CLAUD. Why, then she 's mine. Sweet, let me see your face.
LEON. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar and swear to marry her.
CLAUD. Give me your hand; before this holy friar,
I am your husband, if you like of me.
HERO. And when I liv'd, I was your other wife;
[*Unmasking.*
And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.
CLAUD. Another Hero!
HERO. Nothing certainer;
One Hero died defil'd, but I do live,
And surely as I live, I am a maid.
D. PEDRO. The former Hero! Hero that is dead!
LEON. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander liv'd.
FRIAR. All this amazement can I qualify;

When after that the holy rites are ended,
I 'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death.
Meantime let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

BENE. Soft and fair, friar. Which is Beatrice?

BEAT. [*Unmasking*] I answer to that name. What is your will?

BENE. Do not you love me?

BEAT. Why, no; no more than reason.

BENE. Why, then your uncle and the prince and Claudio
Have been deceiv'd; they swore you did.

BEAT. Do not you love me?

BENE. Troth, no; no more than reason.

BEAT. Why, then my cousin Margaret and Ursula
Are much deceiv'd; for they did swear you did.

BENE. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

BEAT. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

BENE. 'T is no such matter. Then you do not love me?

BEAT. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

LEON. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

CLAUD. And I 'll be sworn upon 't that he loves her;
For here 's a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

HERO. And here 's another
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

BENE. A miracle! here 's our own hands against our hearts. Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

BEAT. I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion; and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

BENE. Peace! I will stop your mouth. [*Kissing her.*

D. PEDRO. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

BENE. I 'll tell thee what, prince; a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour. Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No; if a man will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this

is my conclusion. For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised and love my cousin.

CLAUD. I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

BENE. Come, come, we are friends; let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels.

LEON. We'll have dancing afterward.

BENE. First, of my word; therefore play, music. Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife; there is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.

Enter a Messenger.

MESS. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

BENE. Think not on him till to-morrow; I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. Strike up, pipers.

[*Dance. Exeunt.*

NOTES

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.—The stage-direction in the Quarto and the Folios is as follows: "Enter Leonato gouernour of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his niece, with a messenger." Here we have an allusion to a character—Innogen—who never appears in the play at all. Probably Shakespeare intended to introduce her on the scene, found that there was no place for her, and so dropped her out of the scheme of the piece; only, through some inadvertence, the name was left in. We might have expected the Folio version to correct the error of the Quarto. *Innogen* may be a corruption of *Imogen*, the name, one need scarcely add, of the heroine in *Cymbeline*.

TITLE.—It may be worth while to note that the title of the play passed into a proverb; or was already one. Thus Cotgrave has, "*Une levée de bouclier:* Much ado about nothing; a great shew, or much doings to little purpose; mightie preparations for a meane exploit."

ACT I. SCENE I.

7 *Sort.* 'Rank,' or 'reputation.' So, amongst other passages, *Henry V.* iv. 7. 142, "His enemy is a gentleman of great sort." *Sort* is derived, through the French, from Latin *sortem*.

21 *Badge.* 'Sign.' So in *Sonnet* 44 we have, "Heavy tears, badges of either's woe."

25 *Kind.* 'Natural.' Shakespeare applies the epithet in *Lucrece*, 1423, to a picture which is true to life—

> "Much imaginary work was there;
> Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind."

28 *I pray you.* Note that Beatrice's first enquiry is about Benedick, for whom, of course, she has an unacknowledged liking. The sarcastic, ironical tone of her query sounds the keynote of the word-and-wit encounters that subsequently take place betwixt this "happy, happy pair."

Montanto. Implying that Benedick was a great fencer, since *Montanto* was a fencing term, "an upright blow or thrust," as Cotgrave defines it. The form *montant* occurs in the *Merry Wives*, ii. 3. 27, in a list of similar technicalities. *Montanto* is, no doubt, a quasi-Italian formation from this. Cf. *coranto*, from *courant*.

34 *Pleasant.* 'Witty,' 'facetious.' A very common meaning. Cf. the French *plaisant, plaisanterie.*

36 *Set up his bills.* When a fencing-master visited a town he posted up bills setting forth his accomplishments, and the reasons why the world should learn fencing from him alone. Probably, too, these notices contained challenges to all who might feel inclined to have a bout with him. Fencers, however, were not the only people who employed this system of *réclame.* Dr. Faustus asks himself—

> "Are not thy bills hung up as monuments,
> Whereby whole cities have escaped the plague?"
> —Act i. scene 1, lines 19–20;

where the bills, pretty certainly, are the advertisements with which, as a travelling physician, he had had towns placarded. In Ben Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*, iii. 1, there are two very choice specimens of these "puffs circumstantial," after reading which the modern advertiser might well say, "Pereant illi qui ante nos nostra dixerint."

37 *At the flight.* The *flight*, in archery, signified a special and very difficult kind of shooting. Elsewhere it is called "roving," and the point of the exercise appears to have been, that the archer aimed at objects only just within arrow-shot. Clearly, therefore, the skill consisted in accurately judging distances.

39 *The bird-bolt.* The bird-bolt was a short blunt arrow. These bolts were used by sportsmen in shooting small birds; being flat at the end, they would just stun the bird without damaging its plumage, or spoiling the flesh for eating purposes. Allusions to them are frequent. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 23, "Sweet Cupid, thou hast thumped him with thy bird-bolt;" and (to go outside Shakespeare) Lyly's *Sapho and Phao*, i. 1, where the distinction between bolts and ordinary arrows is emphasised: "Hee gives thee bolts, Cupid, in steed of arrowes." From Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*, ii. 3, it would seem that there were other baser uses to which they came—

> "Gins to catch him birds, with bow and bolt
> To shoot at nimble squirrels in the holt."

"The birdbolt" is the sign of an inn at Cambridge.

40 *Killed and eaten in these wars.* A natural piece of exaggeration. Cf. *Henry V.* iii. 7. 99–100—

> "*Ram.* He longs to eat the English.
> "*Con.* I think he will eat all he kills."

42 *Tax.* 'Censure.' Cf. *As You Like It*, i. 2. 91, "You'll be whipped for taxation."

43 *Meet with you.* 'Even with you.' A provincialism.

51 *Stuffed with.* 'Full of.' Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. 183, "Stuffed . . . with honourable parts."

60 *Five wits.* "The wits," says Johnson, "seem to have been reckoned five, by analogy to the five senses, or the inlets of ideas." As a matter of fact the "five wits" are often equivalent to the five senses. This is clear from many passages; *e.g.* from a quotation which Hunter gives (*Illustrations*, vol. ii. p. 271) from Henry the Eighth's *Primer* (1546), "My five wits have I fondly misused and spent, in hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and also feeling." Shakespeare has the same reference in *Twelfth Night*, iv. 2. 92; *Sonnet* 141; and *Lear*, iii. 4. 269. *Wit*, according to Malone, was in Shakespeare's time "the general term for the intellectual power." (DYCE'S *Glossary to Shakespeare*, p. 57.

62 *Wit enough to keep himself warm.* A proverb. So the *Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 1. 268-69—

"*Pet.* Am I not wise?

"*Kath.* Yes; keep you warm."

63 *Difference.* 'To serve as a distinction.' A term from heraldry, too intricate to be explained here. Compare *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 183, "Wear your rue with a difference."

66 *A new sworn brother.* That is, 'bosom friend.' Said in allusion to the mediæval expression, "Frates jurati," or "Fratres conjurati." They were persons, says Hunter, "linked together in small fellowships, perhaps not more than two, who undertook to defend and assist each other in a military expedition under the sanction of some stricter tie than that which binds the individuals composing a whole army to each other. They are found in genuine history, as well as in the romances of chivalry." (*Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. i. p. 244.) Shakespeare has the phrase several times; *e.g.* in *Richard II.* v. 1. 20-21—

"Sworn brother, sweet,
To grim necessity;"

and *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 607, "What a fool Honesty is! and Trust, his sworn brother."

70 *Block.* That is, 'the wooden block on which hats are made.' A term still in use. "This is a good block," says Lear (iv. 6. 187), meaning 'shape.'

71 *Not in your books.* 'Not one whom you trust, and to whom you give credit.' We still say that a man is in a person's "books," good or bad, and probably the phrase originated in some commercial practice. To be in a tradesman's "good books" meant that he regarded you as a safe customer, whose debts would not, in technical language, prove "bad."

74 *No young squarer.* That is, 'quarreler.' The noun is not found elsewhere in Shakespeare; the verb he uses several times in this sense, *e.g.* in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 28–30—

"And now they never meet in grove or green,
. . . . .
But they do square."

"To square up to" a person is still in use, the metaphor of course being from the position of a boxer.

89 *To meet your trouble.* Said, presumably, in allusion to the proverb, "Don't meet your trouble half way."

95 *Charge.* 'Burden;' *i.e.* of entertaining Don Pedro. Mr. Marshall aptly remarks: "The royal progresses in which the Sovereign used to indulge in Shakespeare's time no doubt conferred great honour upon the person her majesty visited; but they were also a source of considerable expense." A famous royal visit was that which Elizabeth made to the Earl of Leicester at Kenilworth.

101 *Have it full.* 'Now you know all about it;' or perhaps the words imply that Benedick has had the worst of the wit-encounter.

103 *Fathers herself.* 'Shows by her face who her father was.'

105 *If Signior Leonato*, &c. Probably Benedick says this to Beatrice, Don Pedro and Leonato having moved away. As to the sense of the sentence, Benedick seems to mean that Hero would not care to change heads with her father; but the repartee leaves something to be desired.

113 *Courtesy.* We may remember Milton's derivation—correct enough—in *Comus*, 322–325—

"Thy honest offer'd courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tapstry halls
In courts of princes, where it first was nam'd."

So Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, vi. 1. 1; so, too, Skeat.

114 *Must convert.* 'Convert' = 'change,' used intransitively, is not uncommon. Cf. *Lucrece*, 592, "Stones dissolv'd to water do convert;" and "convert from" in *Sonnet* 49, "Love, converted from the thing it was."

116 *Only you excepted.* When "excepted" and "except" follow the noun they are probably to be regarded as passive participles; when they precede, as prepositions. Contrast the present instance with iii. 1. 93, "Always excepted my dear Claudio;" and see Abbot, *Shakespearian Grammar*, p. 81.

119 *A dear happiness.* 'What good luck for them.'

128 *As yours were.* It is tempting to leave out the "were."

129 *A rare parrot-teacher.* Implying that she has a fine faculty for prattling.

130 *Of my tongue.* 'Which I have taught;' or, 'A bird with such a tongue as mine.'

159 *Too low.* 'Too short.' Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 1. 136, "Too high to be enthrall'd to low."

160 *Too brown for a fair praise.* The quibble is obvious. As to "brown" compare what Beatrice says of herself in act ii. scene 1, "I am sun-burned." Doubtless there is an allusion to the Elizabethan distaste for dark complexions. As we read in *Sonnet* 127, "Black was not counted fair." So *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 247–270.

168 *Case.* 'Jewel-box.' *Case* sometimes meant 'a suit of clothes.' So "Cases of buckram" in 1 *Henry IV.* i. 2. 201.

169 *With a sad brow.* 'In sober earnest,' 'seriously.' Compare *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 156, "Sad brow and sober maid." "Sad" = 'serious,' 'grave,' is very common in Shakespeare.

Play the flouting Jack. As a schoolboy phrases it, "Are you trying to be funny?" So *Tempest*, iv. 198, "Done little better than played the Jack with us;" *i.e.* 'made fools of us.' A Jack was the typical saucy, pert fellow. Like the French *Jacques*, the word had a contemptuous sense, even as early as Chaucer's time: "Go fro the window, Jacke fool, she said" (*Canterbury Tales*, 3708, "The Miller's Tale.") It has enriched the language with a whole series of compounds, "Jack-an-apes," "Jack-ass," "boot-Jack." With regard to what follows—"Cupid is a good hare-finder," &c.—I suspect Benedick is talking intentional nonsense.

172 *To go in.* 'Join in.'

176 *There's her cousin.* Evidently Benedick is not so indifferent about Beatrice as he would have his friends believe.

186 *Sigh away Sundays.* Why Sundays? Warburton thought that it was a proverbial expression; but it does not occur elsewhere. Perhaps Sunday was only taken as being the day of rest, and there may be a sneer at the Puritan do-nothing Sabbath.

194 *He.* Claudio.

195 *Your grace's part; i.e.* 'to ask with whom he is in love.'

198–99 *So were it utter'd. Like the old tale.* As to the "old tale." The reference is to a popular story of the time, the tale of Mr. Fox, a grisly *conte* of the "Bluebeard" type, which reappears in different guises in different countries. Cf., for instance, the tale of *Jacke of Shrewsberrie* in the *Ingoldsby Legends*, ii. pp. 169–185. Even with the story to guide us the text is difficult, and one is inclined to think with Johnson that something has dropped out of the dialogue. Johnson himself proposed a very neat change: he suggested that Claudio's speech should break off before *utter'd*, and that *utter'd* should be assigned to Benedick. The arrangement would then be as follows:

"*Claud.* If this were so, so were it (implying that Benedick's account is incorrect).

"*Bene.* Utter'd like the old tale, my lad" (criticising Claudio's rather oracular remark).

Taking the text as it stands, I think the words mean, 'Your description would be quite correct—if only it were true,' a sort of παραπροσδοκίαν. Claudio wishes to make Don Pedro disbelieve Benedick, and he seemingly ejaculates, as an Irishman might, "Your account of the facts is admirable, if only the facts were genuine."

205 *Fetch me in.* 'To trick me into an admission that I love her.'

221 *Recheat.* A hunting term. When the hounds were called off a certain set of notes was sounded on the horn; this was called a *rechʉat;* Old French *requeste;* Modern, *requête.* No one need be reminded that Shakespeare was familiar with the terminology of all sorts and conditions of crafts and pursuits. Mr. Blades has shown quite clearly and conclusively that the poet was a printer before he descended to play-writing; he was an attorney, too, as Lord Campbell knew; and so on.

222 *Baldrick.* 'Belt.'

225 *Fine.* 'End,' 'conclusion.' "The fine is the crown" (*i.e. finis coronat opus*), *All's Well*, iv. 4. 35. Much the same word-quibble occurs in *Hamlet*, v. 1. 115.

235 *Argument.* A signal proof of the futility of railing at marriage. *Argument* often='theme,' 'subject.' Cf. *argumentum*='plot of a piece.'

236 *Hang me in a bottle like a cat.* The domestic cat, placed in a small wooden barrel ("bottle"), or basket, served as an excellent target for the Elizabethan sportsman. To add to the happiness of the animal a quantity of soot was sometimes inserted in the barrel.

238 *Cald Adam.* Theobald was certainly right in regarding this as a reference to the famous archer and outlaw whose praises are sung in an old ballad included in Percy's *Reliques.* Adam Bell and his associates are mentioned together in stanza the third—

"The one of them hight Adam Bel,
The other Clym of the Clough,
The third was William of Cloudesly,
An archer good enough."

The scene of the exploits of these worthies was the forest of Englewood, near Carlisle. References to them are not infrequent. Thus Ben Jonson writes in the *Alchemist*, v. 1, "No cheating Clim o' the Cloughs;" and most editors substitute "Adam" for "Abraham" in *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 1. 13, where the reading of the copies, "Young Abraham Cupid," seems very pointless. It is unnecessary to note that allusions to the popular ballad-literature of the time occur very often in Shakespeare.

240 *In time the savage bull.* A quotation, or rather misquotation, from Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, which dramatists of the time were never tired of burlesquing and poking fun at. There is a similar hit in the Induction to the *Taming of the Shrew*, 9. 10.

244 *As they write.* On the outside of inns and stables.

250 *In Venice.* Which had a very evil name. Young Englishmen of fashion resorted thither, and returned with manners unimproved, whereupon moralists like Ascham inveighed against the popular practice of travelling. Ascham himself was in Italy, and draws a dreadful picture of Italian life in his *Schoolmaster:* "I sawe in that little tyme (only nine days) more libertie to sinne, than ever I heard tell of in our noble citie of London in ix yeare." Howells, on the other hand, the author of the *Familiar Letters*, a less censorious critic, speaks in pleasant terms of the city of the "winged Lion's marble piles." (See ARBER'S Reprint of the *Instructions for Forraine Travell*, pp. 42–43.) It is scarcely possible that Shakespeare was ever in Italy; yet in the Italian plays, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Othello*, he displays a curiously accurate knowledge of the country.

252 *Temporize with the hours.* 'Change in course of time.'

259–62 *To the tuition of God*, &c. This is a hit at the conventional method of ending a letter, especially an epistle dedicatory. The editors quote a good parallel from Barnaby Googe, who finishes the dedication to his *Palingenius* (1560) on this wise: "And thus committyng your Ladiship with all yours to the tuicion of the moste mercifull God, I ende. From Staple Inne at London, the eighte and twenty of March." Shakespeare sneers at "the dedicated words which writers use" in *Sonnet* 82, and *Timon of Athens*, i. 1. 19–20; while his own prefaces to the poems are commendably brief.

264 *Guarded.* 'Ornamented,' 'trimmed.' *Guards* were strips of velvet, cloth, or whatnot, placed along the edges of clothes to prevent their getting frayed and worn. No doubt, too, they were made to serve as decorations. Compare *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 2. 163–64 (with Mr. Beeching's note)—

"Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows'."

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 59, when Longaville says that he will abjure poetry, and "write in prose," Biron replies, "O, rhymes are guards on wanton Cupid's hose;" and parallels without number might be quoted, down to Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*—

"A crimson hood,
With pearls embroidered and entwined,
Guarded with gold, with ermine lined."
—Canto vi. stanza 5.

265 *Flout old ends.* 'Mock at.' By *old ends* Benedick must mean the hackneyed conclusions of letters which they have just been ridiculing.

274 *Affect.* 'Love.'

276 *When you went onward,* &c. 'When you left for the war which has just been finished.'

279 *And that.* 'Now that.' Sometimes *now* by itself is equivalent to 'now that,' or 'when;' *e.g.* in *Midsummer Night's Dream,* iv. 1. 67, "And now I have the boy, I will undo." (ABBOTT, *Grammar,* p. 194.)

283 *To wars.* The omission of the article in such adverbial phrases is common. Cf. "To cabin," *Tempest,* i. 1. 17; "He foamed at mouth," *Julius Cæsar,* i. 2. 256. Abbott gives a number of parallels, p. 65. The Globe Edition puts a full-stop after *wars;* but probably Claudio was interrupted in the middle of his speech by Don Pedro, who dreads a "lover's tale."

285 *Book of words.* 'A long harangue.' Cf. v. 2. 32.

287 *Break with her.* 'Disclose the matter to her.' Cf. ii. 1. 272, "I have broke with her father."

291 *Complexion.* Scan as four syllables.

293 *Salv'd.* 'Palliated.' So *Sonnet* 35, "Salving thy amiss." *Treatise.* 'Discourse.'

294–6 *What need the bridge,* &c. The sense is simple. 'We should dispense with all that is superfluous: best come straight to the point: *what will serve is fit.*' The difficulty lies in l. 306, where the meaning would be much clearer if we could read *plea* with Hanmer, or *ground* with Collier's *MS. Corrector.* Taking the verse as it stands, I would interpret, 'Admit that a thing is necessary; that is the fairer, more excellent way;' *i.e. grant*= 'admission' (*concedo*).

294 *What need.* The syntax here is doubtful. *What* may be the adverb, and *need* the verb; or the former an adjective, and the latter a noun; *i.e.* 'What need is there that the bridge be broader?'

296 *'Tis once.* 'Once for all.' A curious phrase, which Schmidt takes rather differently, "It is a fact past help." See Abbott, p. 47.

SCENE 2.

1. *Cousin.* Really 'nephew.' But these terms of relationship were used very loosely. So *nephew* is put for *cousin* in 1 *Henry VI.* ii. 5. 64; for *grandchild* in *Othello,* i. 1. 112; and in Marlowe's *Dido Queen of Carthage,* ii. 1. 335, Venus addresses Ascanius thus: "Sleep, my sweet nephew, in these cooling streams." Spenser, in the *Faerie Queene,* book iii. canto 3, stanza 13, has *coosen*='kindred;' and elsewhere he uses *nephews* exactly in the same sense as the Latin *nepotes.* Derivation, *consobrinus,* 'the child of a mother's sister.'

6 *As the event*, &c. 'That shall be as the issue shows.' Only the later Folios read *event*; first Folio and Quarto have *events*.

8 *Thick-pleached.* 'Closely interwoven.' *Pleach* is from the Old French *plessier*, "to plash, plait young branches, one within another." (COTGRAVE.) *Pleach*, *plash*, *ply* are all from the root seen in πλέκειν and *plecto*. We have "hedges even-pleached" in *Henry V.* v. 2. 42; and "pleached arms" = 'folded arms' in *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 14. 73. Compare, too, the present play, iii. 1. 7. In old-fashioned gardens one sometimes finds rows of yew-trees along a pathway trained to meet overhead, and so form a "thick-pleached alley."

9 *Orchard.* 'Garden.' Cf. *Hamlet*, i. 5. 35, "Sleeping in my orchard." *Orchard* only means 'herb-gard,' from A.S. *wyrtgeard*, and the literal use of the word is regular in Shakespeare and Elizabethan writers. So "Orchard of the Hesperides" frequently takes the place of the more usual "Garden of the Hesperides."

12 *Accordant.* 'Willing.'

13 *To take the present time*, &c. An exact parallel occurs in *All's Well*, v. 3. 39, "Let's take the instant by the forward top." Everyone will recollect the proverb, "Take time by the forelock," and some will remember *Othello*, iii. 1. 52, 53—

> "To take the saf'st occasion by the front
> To bring you in again."

18 *Appear itself.* Perhaps the verb is reflexive. Dyce would read *approve*.

21 *Enter Attendants.* So the Cambridge editors. The quarto and folios have no stage-direction, and the close of the scene is rather confusing. Probably Antonio leaves the stage after Leonato says, "Go you, and tell her of it." In the remaining lines Leonato must be speaking to the attendants, though it is strange that he should address them as *cousins*, even if we interpret *cousins* to mean *kinsmen*.

SCENE 3.

1 *What the good-year.* 'A plague on't.' Corrupted from the French *goujère*, and then, I expect, by the familiar process of popular etymology, supposed to mean literally 'good year,' just as we say, "Good day." This explanation would account for some uses of the expression. Here, however, as in the *Merry Wives*, i. 4. 129, and *Lear*, v. 3. 24, Shakespeare is thinking of the original sense of the word.

11 *Saturn.* The malign planet; hence *Saturnine*.

11–19 A complete summary of the "whole duty" of the selfish man.

13 *What I am.* So *Sonnet*, 121. 9, "No, I am that I am;" and contrast Iago's bitter "I am not what I am." (*Othello*, i. 1. 65.)

15 *Tend on.* 'Wait on;' hence 'trouble about.'

16 *Claw.* 'Flatter,' 'humour.' Cotgrave renders *galloner*, "To stroake, cherish, claw, or clap on the back." Probably Shakespeare plays on the secondary meaning of *claw* in *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 2. 64–66. *Clawback* was a synonym to the Elizabethan lexicographers for *adulator*.

25 *A canker in a hedge.* Canker in Shakespeare has three meanings: (1) 'a worm that eats the blossom of a tree;' (2) 'a corroding evil' (cf. *Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 49, "The canker gnaw thy heart"); (3) 'the woolly blight so common on the wild rose;' and hence a 'wild rose,' or, as we generally say, 'dog-rose.' This last is the sense it bears in the present passage. For the same antithesis, canker and rose, compare 1 *Henry IV.* i. 3. 176. In *Sonnet* 54. 5 the wild-rose is called a "canker-bloom;" but "canker-blossom" in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 282, means 'a flower partly eaten by the worm.'

27 *Fashion a carriage.* 'So suit my conduct as to win love.'

43 *What is he for a fool.* 'What kind of fool is he?' The editors compare Ben Jonson, *Silent Women*, iii. 1, "What is he for a vicar?" So Peele's *Edward I.* "What, have we a fellow dropt out of the element? What's he for a man?" (Dyce's *Greene and Peele*, p. 383.) It is exactly the German *was für ein*. Shakespeare does not use the idiom—rather a clumsy one—elsewhere.

52 *March chick.* A chicken hatched in March would have a good start; hence it might fairly be described as "very forward"—scarcely less precocious, in fact, than the lapwing in *Hamlet*, v. 2. 193.

55 *Smoking a musty room.* The room was fumigated either because it had not been used for some time, or (as Steevens phrases it) because "the neglect of cleanliness among our ancestors rendered such precautions too often necessary."

Comes me. A vague dative, very frequent in the English of the time; cf. the *Two Gentlemen*, iv. 4. 9, "He steps me to her trencher." See Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, p. 147.

57 *Behind the arras.* See note on 1 *Henry IV.* ii. 4. 481. The arras was the tapestry work hung on the walls of rooms. Polonius conveyed himself behind the arras only too successfully. (*Hamlet*, iii. 3. 28.) Derived from Arras, the name of the town in North of France at which it was made. For similar derivations cf. *cambric*, from Cambray; *calico*, from Calicut; *fustian*, from Fustát, an Arabic name of Cairo; and (probably) *cypress*, *Twelfth Night*, iii. 1. 132, from Cyprus; not to mention many others.

62 *Cross.* 'Spite.'

63 *Sure.* 'To be relied on.' Compare Macbeth's "Assurance double sure." (*Macbeth*, iv. 1. 83.)

ACT II. SCENE 1.

9 *Like my lady's eldest son.* Some popular allusion, perhaps, the key to which has been lost. As the words stand they are rather pointless.

17 *Shrewd.* 'Sharp,' 'bitter.' Cf. *shrewish.* The original meaning of the word was 'malicious;' thence came the idea 'bad,' 'evil.' So "Shrewd days and nights" in *As You Like It*, v. 4. 179='times of ill-fortune.' Wickliffe translates *καὶ πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα* in *James* iii. 16 by "al schrewed werk." It is the past participle of *schrewen*, 'to curse.'

18 *Curst.* 'Ill-tempered,' like an animal.

24 *If he send me*, &c. Quibbling on *horns* as the symbol of the husband whose wife is unfaithful.

27 *In the woollen.* 'In woollen blankets without the sheets.' So usually explained, but I believe Mr. Marshall is right in his suggestion that "to lie in the woollen"='to be dead,' since the practice of burying persons in woollen stuffs was very general, and even enjoined by Act of Parliament *temp.* Charles II.

36 *Bear-herd.* 'Bear-leader.' Spelt *berrord* in Quarto and first and second Folios. The word occurs elsewhere (*e.g. Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, 2. 21; *2 Henry IV.* i. 2. 192); never, however, in the form *bearward*, which many editors venture to print. Rolfe remarks, "The apes rode on the bear led about by the bear-herd;" but Shakespeare appears to be referring to some popular custom of which we have no account.

Lead his apes in hell. Alluding to an old superstition not complimentary to unmarried ladies. Says a character in an old song printed in Bullen's *Lyrics from Elizabethan Song Books*, p. 44—

> "I marriage would forswear,
> But that I hear men tell
> That she that dies a maid
> Must lead an ape in hell."

Katherine, in the *Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 1. 34, thought that it would be her fate to "lead apes in hell."

42 *For the heavens!* It seems best to place the stop after *Saint Peter*, taking *for the heavens* with what follows, and treating it as a vague oath. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 2. 13. The Globe Edition prints *and away to Saint Peter for the heavens*, with which reading the words must bear, I suppose, their natural sense, 'bound for the heavens.' Perhaps, however, a quibble on the double meaning of the phrase is intended.

55 *Marl.* A rich kind of earth. *Wayward*, because crumbly.

61 *Important.* 'Importunate,' as in *Lear*, iv. 4. 26, "Mourning and important tears," where the Folios, however, read *importun'd.*

67 *Measure.* 'A dance'; properly 'a slow and stately dance,'

as we see from what follows. Jaques, in *As You Like It*, v. 4. 199, is "for other than for dancing measures." For the pun on *measure* in line 62, cf. *Richard II.* iii. 4. 6–9—

"*Lady.* Madam, we 'll dance.

"*The Queen.* My legs can keep no measure in delight,
When my poor heart no measure keeps in grief."

Ancientry. 'Dignity.'

68 *Cinque-pace.* Corrupted by Sir Toby into *sink-a-pace*, *Twelfth Night*, i. 3. 139. Old-fashioned folk complained that people would dance galliards, lavoltas, and suchlike new-fangled measures, while "he which hath no more but the plaine sinque-pace is no better accompted then a verie bungler." (BARNABE RICHE in his *Farewell to the Militarie Profession.*)

75 *Friend.* 'Lover.' "If you have a friend here, convey him," *Merry Wives*, iii. 3. 124.

82 *Favour.* 'Face.' The *case*, of course, is the visor or mask which Don Pedro wears.

Def nd. 'Forbid.' Cf. *défendre.*

84–86 The lines form a couplet of the old fourteen-syllable metre frequent in popular ballad verse, and Dyce was probably right in his suggestion that really they are a quotation from some forgotten poem, and should be printed as such. The reference, of course, is to the classical story of Baucis and Philemon. (OVID, *Metamorphoses*, viii.) Shakespeare may have come across the tale in Golding's translation, though I believe myself that the poet was a good enough scholar to read Ovid in the original. However, this touches on the well-worn "little Latin and less Greek" question, on which Farmer in the last century, and Professor Baynes in this, have said all that there is to say.

85 *Iove.* So the Quarto; the Folios read *love*, an obvious slip.

98 *Answer, clerk;* viz., "Amen." Cf. *Sonnet* 85, "And like unlettered clerk still cry, 'Amen.'"

102 *At a word.* 'Briefly.' German *kurz und gut.* Cf. *Merry Wives*, i. 1. 109.

103 *Waggling.* Cotgrave has, "Triballer: to wagle, or dangle up and downe." Of course, only a frequentative form of *wag.*

105 *So ill-well.* '*Well*, because the likeness is so close; *ill*, because you cut such a sorry figure.'

106 *Dry hand.* Supposed to be the sign of a cold disposition, not prone to love. So *Twelfth Night*, i. 3. 77, and *Othello*, iii. 4. 36–38, for the opposite sign.

116 "*Hundred Merry Tales.*" A popular jest-book, of which a perfect copy (dated 1526) is still extant in the University Library at Göttingen. The *Tales* have been reprinted as a literary curiosity, though their wit is a thought old-world and Joe Millerish. Possibly they were written by John Heywood,

author of the *Epigrams* and some dreary *Interludes*, of which "The Four Ps" is occasionally readable.

124 *Impossible.* 'Extravagant.'

128 *In the fleet.* 'One of the guests present.' The metaphor is carried on in *boarded me.*

129 *Boarded.* 'Accosted.' So *Twelfth Night*, i. 3. 60, and *Merry Wives*, ii. 1. 92. French *aborder*, 'approach.'

132 *Break.* So "break a jest," in act v. 1. 89. Cf. too ii. 3. 245.

146–47 *Near . . . in his love.* So *Richard II.* iii. 1. 17, "Near to the king in blood, and near in love." *Near* (with or without a preposition) frequently implies 'attached to,' whether by relationship or affection.

147 *Enamoured on.* Compare "enamoured upon," in 1 *Henry IV.* v. 2. 70–71. Milton writes, "Amorous on that lovely dye," *Death of a Fair Infant*, 5; and Shakespeare has "fond on" twice, *Sonnet* 84. 14, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 1. 266.

163 *Faith melteth into blood.* *Faith* = 'loyalty to the friend;' *blood* = 'passion,' as often.

164 *An accident of hourly proof.* 'Something which you may verify any day.'

165 *Which I mistrusted not.* Only two feet. Lines with two redundant syllables after the third or fourth foot are not uncommon; *e.g. As You Like It*, ii. 1. 52—

"The flúx | of cómpany. | Anón | a cáre | less hérd;"

Troilus and Cressida, iii. 3. 3—

"To cáll | for récompense; | appéar | it tó | your mínd."

Abbott (pp. 397–400) brings together a number of these "apparent Alexandrines." Of course, the true Alexandrine is a line with six distinct beats.

170 *Willow.* Typical of unhappy love, and unhappiness generally. Chosen possibly in refrence to *Psalm* cxxxvii. 2. So Dyer, *Folk-lore of Shakespeare*, p. 105. Dido stood "with a willow in her hand," *Merchant of Venice*, v. 10; and "Willow, willow," is the burden of Desdemona's song, *Othello*, iv. 3. Indeed, this refrain meets us in many places, always with the same associations; *e.g.* in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, iv. 1. 79–80—

"Then she sung
Nothing but 'Willow, willow, willow;'"

and Massinger's *Maid of Honour*, v. 1—

"You may cry 'Willow, willow' for your brother."

And elsewhere. Claudio is to wear a willow garland as a sign that he has lost his love, Hero.

172 *Usurer's chain.* Referring, says Mr. Marshall, to "the gold chains worn by the more wealthy merchants of that day, many of whom were bankers, and lent out money at interest."

182 *If it will not be.* 'If you will not leave me.'

188 *Though bitter.* So Quarto and Folios; but Johnson's "*the* bitter" is tempting. *Though bitter* seems to be thrown in as a qualification of *base;* with what sense I cannot see.

189 *That puts,* &c. 'That claims to express the general opinion of the world about me.'

194 *A lodge in a warren.* The lodge in which the keeper of a rabbit warren lived would naturally be a dismal place. Cf. use of "grange" for any desolate, lonely house; *e.g.* in *Othello,* i. 1. 106, "My house is not a grange." And of course in Tennyson's *Moated Grange.*

196 *This.* Hero. As she is not present, *this* has been changed by some editors to *the.*

214 *Quarrel to you. To*='motion against.' (ABBOTT, p. 123.) Cf. *Coriolanus,* iv. 5. 133, "Had we no quarrel else to Rome." So *Twelfth Night,* iii. 4. 248.

217 *Misus'd.* 'Abused.' So *As You Like It,* iv. 1. 205.

218 *Block.* As we say, "blockhead." So iii. 1. 67.

223 *Impossible conveyance.* 'Extraordinary sharpness.' I can see no great difficulty in the expression. *Impossible* here, as in line 143, has a vaguely intensitive sense, merely heightening the idea suggested by the word with which it is combined; and *conveyance* implies 'cuteness,' 'trickery.' Polite people never steal; they "convey." (*Merry Wives,* i. 3. 32.) Beatrice passed jest after jest upon Benedick with all the dexterity of a professional juggler.

225 *Speaks poniards.* Exactly Hamlet's "speak daggers" (iii. 2. 414). Compare, too, *Macbeth,* iii. 3. 146, "There's daggers in men's smiles."

226 *Terminations.* 'Words.'

230 *Have turned.* Probably the past infinitive is used through attraction to previous *have.* So Abbott, p. 260. We may compare such an expression as "I hoped to have seen him;" now a solecism, but in Elizabethan English a not uncommon turn of phrase.

232 *Ate.* 'As the goddess of Discord.'

233 *Some scholar.* That is, someone who could speak Latin, the proper tongue in which to exorcise spirits and uncanny folk. When the ghost first appears in *Hamlet,* Marcellus says, "Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio." (i. 1. 42.)

234-237 Very vaguely expressed, but meaning apparently that life in hell and life in a sanctuary are much the same, if Beatrice be present. Benedick and Beatrice try to be so desperately clever and sharp that at times their repartee overreaches itself, and becomes nearly unintelligible.

236 *Thither;* viz., to hell, so as to be quit of Beatrice.

243 *Prester John.* Prester, or Presbyter, John was one of the great mediæval myths—a fabulous monarch who ruled in

the uttermost parts of Asia, professed Christianity, corresponded with the Pope, and maintained a magnificent Court. The old travellers of the Mandeville, Howell, and William Sanday type, are great on the subject of this Eastern potentate and his glories; in particular is there a very circumstantial account of his palace in the travels of Mr. Edward Webbe, reprinted by Professor Arber. Allusions similar to the present one occur constantly in the literature of the time; but how the story arose, or what element of truth there is in them, no one can say.

244 *The great Cham.* 'The Khan of Tartary.'

245 *The Pigmies.* The somewhat legendary nation of dwarfs, the whereabouts of whose land I cannot fix. Different writers have assigned them to different countries—India, Ethiopia, and so on; but all agree that the Pigmies were attacked each year in the spring-time by flocks of cranes. Milton refers to them in *Paradise Lost*, i. 575–6, as

"That small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes."

And in the same book, line 781, he places their territory "beyond the Indian mount;" *i.e.* mount Imaus.

254 *Use.* 'Interest.' Cf. *Sonnet* 6, "That use is not forbidden usury;" and *usance* in the *Merchant of Venice*, i. 3. 46.

267 *Civil as an orange.* A quibble on *civil* and *Seville.* The editors quote Cotgrave: "*Aigre—Douce:* A civile orange, or orange that is betweene sweet and sower." Beatrice therefore means that Claudio has a touch of bitterness in his character, polite though he seems.

268 *That jealous complexion;* viz., yellow, which symbolised jealousy. Cf. the *Winter's Tale*, ii. 3. 106–7—

"'Mongst all colours
No yellow in't, lest she suspect."

And the *Merry Wives*, i. 3. 113. In the *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 110, and the very difficult passage in *Othello*, iii. 3. 116, jealousy is "the green-ey'd monster;" and stage-tradition assigns a dress partly green, partly yellow, to the suspicious husband Ford in the *Merry Wives.*

269 *Blazon.* 'Description;' viz., of Claudio. *Blazon* is a term taken from heraldry, and properly the verb meant 'to describe a shield,' from which came the general sense of 'depicting,' 'describing.' Cf. *Sonnet* 106, "The blazon of sweet beauty's best."

278 *Cue.* *Cue* is generally derived from *queue*, 'a tail;' *i.e.* 'the last word of the previous speaker's part.' It has been suggested, however, that the word got its theatrical sense from a confusion with the capital letter *Q*, short for *quando*, which was marked on the acting version of a play given to each actor, thus showing him when he had to begin to speak. For its use

in Shakespeare cf. *Othello*, i. 2. 83, "Were it my cue to fight," and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. 1. 185. "Turn" is the closest alternative that I can think of.

283 *Stop his mouth.* Compare v. 4. 92.

287 *The windy side.* That is, 'the safe side.' Sir Andrew, in *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 181, kept "o' the windy side of the law." The metaphor is either from shooting or from seamanship.

290 *Good Lord, for alliance.* 'Heaven send me a marriage;' *i.e.* 'an anticipation of *heigh-ho for a husband.*' This seems to me the most natural interpretation.

Goes . . . to the world. 'Gets married.' Cf. *All's Well*, i. 3. 20–21, and "A woman of the world" in *As You Like It*, v. 3. 5.

291 *Sunburned.* 'Without attractions.' Used thus in *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 282, "The Grecian dames are sunburnt." We have already seen (i. 160) that a fair complexion was the Elizabethan ideal of beauty.

312 *Pleasant-spirited.* 'Witty.' Cf. "pleasant," i. 1. 34, with note.

326 *Time goes on crutches.* We may remember Rosalind's account of times, "Divers paces with divers persons," *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 331–335.

329 *Just.* 'Exact.' Now used only as adverb in this sense. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1. 327, "A just pound." See Abbott, p. 26.

332 *Breathing.* 'Delay.' So *Lucrece*, 1720. Cf. 1 *Henry IV.* v. 4. 15, "We breathe too long" = 'tarry.'

351 *Queasy.* 'Squeamish.' A Scandinavian word. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, iii. 2. 20, *queasy* = 'disgusted with,' "Queasy with his insolence."

Scene 2.

19 *Temper.* 'Mix.' Always used of compounding poisons; *e.g. Hamlet*, v. 2. 339, "It is a poison tempered by himself."

22 *Estimation.* 'Value,' 'worth.' So *All's Well*, v. 3. 4. A word very variously used in Shakespeare.

25 *Misuse.* 'Deceive.'

32 *Intend.* 'Pretend.' Cf. *Richard III.* iii. 5. 8; iii. 7. 45.

37 *Instances.* 'Proofs.' "O, instance strong as heaven itself," *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 2. 155.

40 *Borachio.* Quarto and Folios read *Claudio.* It is not possible to discuss here the arguments for and against the reading of the copies. See the Cambridge *Shakespeare*, vol. ii. note 12. I think *Claudio* must be a slip for *Borachio*, and that Theobald was right in making the change, which many editors have adopted. The Globe Edition marks the passage as

corrupt, a sign that the text of Quarto and Folios is at least open to great suspicion.

43 *Seeming truth.* 'Apparent proof.' Folios have *truths.*

45 *Preparation.* For the marriage.

46 *Grow this.* 'Let this come.'

Scene 3.

13 *The drum and the fife.* When Othello bids farewell to his soldier life he does not forget "the spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife." (iii. 3. 352.)

15 *Armour; i.e.* 'suit of armour.' So used by Cotgrave: "*Enfondrer un harnois:* to make a great dint in an armour."

18 *And a soldier.* "I speak to thee plain soldier," *Henry V.* v. 2. 156.

19 *Orthography.* Abstract for concrete. There is no need to change to *orthographer*, as do some editors.

20 *Banquet.* Properly 'the dessert after a feast,' not the feast itself. Used in its strict sense in *As You Like It*, ii. 5. 65.

29 *Cheapen.* 'Make a bid for.' So *Pericles*, iv. 6. 30, "Cheapen a kiss of her."

30–31 *Noble . . . angel.* Quibbling on the names of the coins *noble* (worth 6*s.* 8*d.*) and *angel* (10*s.*). The puns were too obvious not to occur often. Cf. *Merry Wives*, i. 3. 60–61.

32 *Of what colour it please God.* Though the fashionable shade was golden, the Queen having light, rather reddish hair. Benedick means that the lady who "comes in his grace" need not trouble to dye her hair, a common practice at that time. False hair, too, was much worn, as we see from several passages; *e.g. Timon of Athens*, iv. 3. 144; *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 2. 92–96; and *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 259. Cf. too *Sonnet* 68—

> "Before the golden tresses of the dead,
> The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
> To live a second life on second head."

Coryat, in his *Crudities*, tells us that the Venetian ladies used to wash their hair with certain drugs and oils, and then bleach it in the sun (vol. ii. pp. 37–38); and perhaps it was from Italy that the habit passed into England, Italian influence being dominant at the time, as French influence was later on in the century.

36–37 Compare *Merchant of Venice*, v. 56–57—

> "Soft stillness and the night
> Become the touches of sweet harmony."

40 *We'll fit the kid-fox.* So Quarto and Folios, but the text is strange. *Kid-fox* = 'a young fox' (SCHMIDT) sounds desperately unsportsmanlike, and, as applied to the mature Benedick, is not very pointed. An obvious emendation is *hid fox*, an allusion to the game of "hide and seek," mentioned in *Hamlet*,

iv. 2. 32, "Hide fox, and all after," and *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 78. Obviously *hid fox* would exactly fit in with Don Pedro's question, "See you where Benedick hath *hid* himself?" I have not ventured, however, to adopt the correction.

45 *Put a strange face on.* 'Appear to be unconscious of.' To "look strange" at a person was to 'cut him,' as we say. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, ii. 2. 112; *Sonnet* 49. 5. Malvolio was "strange" = 'distant,' 'reserved,' *Twelfth Night*, ii. 5. 184.

46 *Woo.* 'Entreat.'

53 *Noting.* A quibble, of course, on *nothing*, which seems to have been pronounced "*noting*."

57 *Hale souls.* Compare *Twelfth Night*, ii. 3. 61, "A catch [song] that will draw three souls out of one weaver"—weavers, as we know from 1 *Henry IV.* ii. 4. 147, having been men of melody. For the most part they were Calvinist refugees from the Netherlands; hence their love of hymns, psalms, &c.

66 *Hey nonny, nonny.* A jingling refrain often found, with slight variations. There is a quaint old song in Bullen's *Elizabethan Lyrics* (p. 118), of which one couplet runs—

"For where shall now the wedding be?
For and hey-nonny-no in an old ivy tree."

Miles Coverdale, in the Preface to his *Goastly Psalmes* (1538), wishes that the countrywomen, as they sat at work, would sing serious tunes; "they should be better occupied than with 'Hey, nonny, nonny,' and suchlike fantasies." (CHAPPELL'S *Popular Music*, p. 54.) We may remember, of course, Ophelia's song, *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 165; Edgar's nonsense in *Lear*, iii. 4. 102; and the beautiful "It was a lover and his lass," in *As You Like It*, v. 3. 17–30.

68 *Dumps.* 'Dismal subjects;' generally 'low spirits' ("In the dumps," as we say).

79 *The night raven.* Alluding to the superstition that the raven would fly about any house where there was sickness. Compare *Othello*, iv. 1. 21, "As doth the raven o'er the infectious house." The croak of the bird was the worst of omens. Marlowe speaks of—

"The sad presaging raven, that tolls
The sick man's passport in her hollow beak."

So Peele— —*Jew of Malta*, ii. 1.

"Like as the fatal raven, that in his voice
Carries the dreadful summons of our death."

—DYCE'S *Greene and Peele*, p. 469.

Other passages to the same effect might be given.

90 *Stalk on.* Referring to the stalking-horse (the painted figure of a real one) under cover of which sportsmen approached their game. Cf. *As You Like It*, v. 4. 111, "He uses his folly like a stalking-horse." On Scotch moors, I believe, it is not

unusual for keepers late in the season, when the grouse are very wild, to use a cart and pony for the same purpose.

95 *Sits the wind?* 'Is that how matters lie?' So 1 *Henry IV.* iii. 3. 102, "Is the wind in that door, i' faith?"

98 *Past the infinite of thought.* 'Beyond all conception.'

101 *Never counterfeit*, &c. 'Her feeling (*passion*) is far too genuine to be simulated.' *Passion* = 'emotion' generally.

110 *Would have thought.* 'Be ready to think;' not, as one might think, instead of *should*. Abbott (p. 233) compares *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 2. 144.

114 *Gull.* 'Trick.' Usually = 'a fool,' 'dupe.'

117 *Hold it up.* 'Keep the joke going.'

127 *Smock.* Poor Desdemona was "pale as [her] smock," *Othello*, v. 2. 273; but audiences at the beginning of this century were too nice and squeamish to tolerate *smock*, so sometimes the actors toned the text down to "pale as thy *sheets*." (GOMME'S *Gentleman's Magazine Library*, Dialect Section, p. 5.)

132 *Halfpence.* 'Small bits;' *i.e.* 'tiny as a halfpenny.'

148 *An alms.* 'An act of charity.'

158 *Daffed.* 'Put on one side.' Same as *doff* = 'do off.' Cf. *don* = 'do on.' Compare act v. 1. 78, where the sense is 'put off.' So *Othello*, iv. 2. 176, "Every day thou daffest me with some device, Iago."

166 *Crossness.* 'Perverseness,' 'habit of contradicting.'

169 *Contemptible.* 'Scornful.' See Abbott, p. 19.

171 *A good outward happiness.* 'A pleasing appearance, exterior.' An inversion almost of adjective and noun. So in *Sonnet* 51, "Swift extremity" = 'extreme swiftness.'

172 *Fore God.* A severe statute was passed in the reign of James I. "to restrain the abuses of players." It began with the preambule, "For the preventing and avoiding of the great abuse of the holy name of God in stage-plays, enterludes," &c.; and to comply with this enactment, "fore God" was generally altered to "fore *me*." Compare *All's Well*, ii. 3. 31, "Fore me, I speak in respect;" *Othello*, iv. 1. 150 ("before me"); *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 4. 34 ("afore me"). In some cases the text of the Quartos is softened down in the Folio; *e.g.* in *Merchant of Venice*, where "I pray God grant" becomes "I wish." This, probably, was Shakespeare's reason for using such absurd oaths as "by Janus," *Othello*, i. 2. 33.

187 *Wear it out.* 'Get over her love' (to employ a somewhat slang word).

194 *Unworthy.* That is 'to have,' which words indeed the Folios insert; but the Quarto reading is satisfactory enough.

201 *Another's dotage. Another* = 'each other'; *dotage* = 'fondness;' Benedick believing Beatrice to be in love with him, and *vice versa*.

207 *Have their full bent.* 'Are strained to the utmost.' A metaphor from archery. "In the full bent," *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 30.

208 *Censur'd.* 'Judged.'

212 *Detractions.* That is, 'the faults which their detractors find in them.'

215 *And wise.* Benedick's description of Beatrice recalls Lorenzo's comment on Jessica:

"For she is wise . . .
And fair she is . . .
And true she is . . ."

So Shakespeare, speaking of his friend, says (*Sonnet* 105), "'Fair, kind and true' is all my argument."

Reprove. 'Disprove.' "Reprove my allegation, if you can," 2 *Henry VI.* iii. 1. 40.

218 *Quirks.* 'Jests.'

222 *Quips.* 'Smart sayings.' "Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles," *L'Allegro*, 27. Pistol in the *Merry Wives*, ii. 1. 43, makes an unkindly quip about Falstaff's amplitude of person —a delicate point. *Quip* is cognate with Welsh *chwip* = 'a quick turn.' (SKEAT.) Cf. *quibble.*

Sentences. 'Maxims' (*sententiæ*). "Let me speak like yourself, and lay a sentence," *Othello*, i. 3. 199.

223 *From the career of his humour.* 'From following the bent of his inclination.' *Career*, French *carrière*, is a term borrowed from horsemanship. Cf. v. 1, "Meet your wit in the career." Shakespeare has the word several times; *e.g. Henry V.* ii. 1. 133, a very difficult phrase, "passes careers;" and *Merry Wives*, i. 1. 184.

244 *I am a Jew.* So 1 *Henry IV.* ii. 4. 198, "They were bound, every man of them; or I am a Jew else, an Ebrew Jew."

ACT III. SCENE 1.

3 *Proposing.* 'Talking.' See line 12.

4 *Whisper her ear. Whisper*, says Abbott, p. 134, is frequently used without a preposition before a personal object; *e.g. Henry VIII.* i. 1. 179, "He came to whisper Wolsey;" rarely, as here, before an impersonal noun.

9–10 *Favourites . . . Made proud by princes.* Compare *Sonnet* 25. 4, "Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread."

10 *Advance.* Used technically of hoisting a standard. Cf. for a beautiful instance *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 3. 96, and, outside Shakespeare—

"Unfurl'd
Th' imperial ensign, which full high advanc't
Shon like a meteor."—*Paradise Lost*, i. 536.

12 *Listen.* Later Folios *listen to;* but cf. *Lear*, v. 3. 181, "List a brief tale." *Listen to* makes the scansion clearer. With the folio reading the first two words (I think) form one foot. Abbott, however, takes differently. (p. 372.)

Purpose. So the Folios; the Quarto has *propose* = 'conversation,' the French *propos*. Whichever we read, the sense is the same, since *purpose* = 'talk' is quite common. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, iv. 337, "No gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles;" and "gentle purpose" in the *Faerie Queene*, iii. 8. 14.

16 *Trace.* 'Walk.'

24 *Like a lapwing.* So *Comedy of Errors*, iv. 2. 27, "Far from her nest the lapwing cries away." When this bird (better known as the peewit) is disturbed in its nest, it runs along the ground for some distance before it rises, to prevent, of course, the nest being found. In *Sir Gyles Goosecappe* a character is described as being "fearfull as a Haire, and will lye like a Lapwing." (BULLEN'S *Old Plays*, vol. iii. p. 9.) Obviously, therefore, it symbolised cunning.

30 *Woodbine. Woodbine* seems to have been another name for *honeysuckle*. Cf., at any rate, line 8, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iv. 1. 47.

35 *Coy.* 'Shy.' Often the word signifies 'contemptuous.' So Cotgrave has "Mespriseresse: A coy, a squeamish, or scornful dame." This (almost) is its meaning in *Comus*, 737, "List, lady; be not coy." From *quietus*, through French *coi*.

36 *Haggards of the rock.* The meaning of *haggard* in Shakespeare is not quite certain. Probably it signifies any untamed, untrained hawk, without reference to the species. Cf. *Othello*, iii. 3. 260–63, and *Twelfth Night*, iii. 1. 72. So Hortensia calls Bianca a "proud disdainful haggard," *Taming of the Shrew*, iv. 2. 39. As to derivation, Skeat says, "O.F. *hagard*, wild; esp. used of a wild falcon, lit. hedge-falcon;" the first part of the word, *hag*, being akin to *hedge*, *haw* (as in *haw-thorn* = 'hedge-thorn'). The editors show that more than one kind of hawk builds in rocks; so that the descriptive touch, "of the rock," is not very close.

42 *Wish him wrestle.* The *to* omitted, as not infrequently. Cf. 1 *Henry IV.* i. 3. 159; *Measure for Measure*, iv. 3. 138.

45 *Full.* 'Fully.' Used adverbially. See Abbott, p. 17.

56 *Self-endeared.* 'In love with herself.' A curious idea that meets us in several places; *e.g.* in *Venus and Adonis*, 157, and the *Sonnets* (3 and 62).

60 *How.* 'However.'

Featur'd. So *Sonnet* 29, "Featured like him."

61 *Spell him backward.* Not so much 'misconstrue him,' as 'make out everything in him to be bad;' *i.e.* by exaggerating some peculiarities, and misrepresenting others. The editors see

here (*aut vidisse putant*) an allusion to the idea that witches say their prayers backwards; the theory is rather far-fetched.

63 *Black.* 'Dark-complexioned.'

Antic. 'Buffoon.' Falstaff jeered at "old father antic the law," 1 *Henry IV.* i. 2. 57. The *New English Dictionary* derives from Italian *antico*, 'a cavern containing quaint devices, figures, &c., on the walls;' whence anything fantastic was called *antic*. Compare the parallel word *grotesque*, from *grotta*, 'a grotto.' Skeat, however, identifies with *antique*.

65 *Low.* 'Short,' as in i. 1. 159, "Too low for a high praise."

72 *From.* 'Apart from;' *i.e.* unconventional. Abbott (p. 105) quotes many similar passages; *e.g. Julius Cæsar*, i. 3. 35, "Clean from the purpose."

76 *Press me to death.* Referring to the punishment or torture known as the *peine forte et dure*, by which accused persons who refused to plead were pressed down under heavy weights until they either complied with what was required of them, or died altogether. Cf. Milton's lines *On the University Carrier*, the second epitaph, 25–26.

77 *Like cover'd fire.* Not unlike *Titus Andronicus*, ii. 4. 36–37— "Sorrow concealed, like an oven stopp'd,
Doth burn the heart to cinders where it is."
So *Venus and Adonis*, 331.

79 *Than die.* The first Folio has *to die;* but the omission of *to* with the infinitive after the phrases "It were best," "It were better," is common (see Abbott, p. 253), and the present case is an extension of the idiom. Usually such expressions as, "Best draw my sword" (*Cymbeline*, iii. 6. 25), "Better be with the dead" (*Macbeth*, iii. 2. 20), represent "an unconscious blending of two constructions, the infinitive and imperative."

80 *Tickling.* Trisyllable, as though it were "tickeling," this extra vowel-sound being common before liquids in dissyllables. Compare the frequent scansion of *England* as three syllables; *e.g. Richard II.* iv. 1. 17; *Richard III.* iv. 4. 263. (Abbott, pp. 363–65.)

86 *Empoison. Coriolanus*, v. 6. 11, "As with a man by his own alms empoison'd."

102 *Every day.* Said to have been a colloquial phrase = 'forthwith,' which gives excellent sense; but a little more evidence in support of this view would have been welcome.

104 *Limed.* Like a bird caught with birdlime.

105 *Loving goes by haps.* The proverb said that "marrying and hanging go by destiny;" and Shakespeare knew the proverb (*Merchant of Venice*, ii. 9. 82–83).

107 *What fire*, &c. Alluding to the old superstition that a

person's ears burn when he is being spoken of. Steevens quotes a quaint piece of jingle—

"I doe credite giue
Vnto the saying old,
Which is, whenas the eares doe burne,
Some thing on thee is told."

110 *No glory lives*, &c. Meaning apparently (but the line is curious) that contemptuous, scornful people are not praised behind their backs. Beatrice has been listening, and, with the proverbial fortune of listeners, has heard no good of herself.

112 *Taming*. As though she were a hawk.

116 We may just note that Beatrice's soliloquy is written in rhyme, indeed in alternate rhyme. Shakespeare often employs it in passages of sententious moralising. For instance, in *Othello*, i. 3. 202–209, when the Duke gives judicious advice to Brabantio, he puts his platitudes into rhymed couplets. Also, rhyme is appropriate at the close of a scene, rounding off the work pleasantly, and leaving a genial flavour behind it.

Scene 2.

3 *Bring*. 'Accompany.'

10 *Cut Cupid's bow-string*. A way of saying that Cupid had been completely disabled. In *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 2. 114, the phrase has a different meaning.

11 *Sound as a bell*. Really an involuntary play upon the double meaning of *sound*, 'healthy' and 'clear-sounding.' "Sound as things that are hollow," *Measure for Measure*, i. 2. 56, when the quibble is intentional.

20 *Tooth-ache*. Considered an appropriate malady for the love-sick. The editors quote from one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, *The False One*, ii. 3—

"You had best be troubled with the tooth-ache too,
For lovers ever are."

23 *Hang it first*. Referring obviously to the capital punishment, to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.

25 *Or a worm*. A vulgar theory as to the cause of tooth-ache that still survives.

26 *Every one can master*. The truism which Leonato expands. (v. i. 5–19.)

29 *Fancy*. 'Love,' as often; *e.g.* "Maiden meditation, fancy-free," *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1. 164. Used here with an obvious quibble.

30 *Strange disguises*. In what follows, lines 33–37 (most of which is omitted in the Folios), Shakespeare satirises the foibles of contemporary fashion. Stubbes and Harrison and such like censorious moralists perpetually denounce the extravagance and

absurdities of the Englishman's dress at this time. The English, they say, must always ape foreign ways. Travellers go to Italy and return "Italianate" (their favourite word), to scoff at everything English. (Cf. *As You Like It*, iv. 1. 34–41.) We may remember, too, Portia's criticism on "Falconbridge, the young baron of England," *Merchant of Venice*, i. 2. 79–81, "How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere."

33 *Slops.* 'Very wide breeches.' Cf. 2 *Henry IV.* i. 2. 34, "Satin for my short cloak and my slops."

34 *No doublet.* Because the Spanish cloak was so long and ample as to hide the doublet.

38 *Brushes his hat.* Curiously enough we are told in *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 398, that the lover should be careful to have his "bonnet unbanded;" and a *résumé* of the appropriate love symptoms is given in Heywood's *Maid of the Exchange*—

> "Cross-arm myself; study *ay-mes;*
> Defy my hat-band; tread beneath my feet
> Shoe-strings and garters."

But Benedick was not the man to be conventional and woo with the ordinary wiles of disconsolate lovers. Beatrice would have ridiculed him to death.

43 *Tennis balls.* 'Stuffed with hair.'

46 *Civet.* Used as a perfume, though, as Touchstone told the shepherd in *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 66, it is "of a baser birth than tar." Stubbes in the *Anatomy of Abuses* (New Shakspere Society's Reprint, part i. p. 77) asks: "Is not this a certen sweete Pride to have civet, muske, sweete powders?" &c. Lear wanted "an ounce of civet to sweeten (his) imagination." (iv. 6. 132–133.)

51 *To wash his face.* Meaning, perhaps, as Mr. Marshall suggests, with some preparation or wash for the complexion; an anticipation, that is, of the "paint himself" in the next line. Otherwise Claudio's remark would be a curious commentary on Elizabethan ways.

52 *Paint himself.* Ladies regularly used cosmetics, dyes, &c.; "Fairing the foul with art's false borrow'd face," *Sonnet* 129. This practice (cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 1. 148) was one of the *Abuses* at which Stubbes declaimed in the *Anatomie*, part i. pp. 67–69 of the New Shakspere Society's Reprint. Probably effeminate men employed the same devices.

55 *Stops.* That is, 'the stops on the finger-board of his lute.'

61 *His ill conditions.* 'His bad qualities.' We say that a man is "ill-conditioned."

66 *Hobby-horses.* A term of contempt, usually applied to women, as in the *Winter's Tale*, i. 1. 276.

70 *Two bears.* That is, *sævis inter se convenit ursis.* Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 7, "One bear will not bite another."

73 *Good den.* Short for the full phrase, "God give you good evening." So *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 4. 115; *As You Like It*, v. 1. 16.

86 *Aim better at me.* 'Make a better guess at my feelings towards you from what I am about to say.'

91 *Circumstances shorten'd.* 'To be brief.' *Circumstance* occasionally = 'elaborate detail,' as in *Othello*, iii. 2. 354, "Circumstance of war." Sometimes *circumlocution* is the nearest equivalent; *e.g.* in *Merchant of Venice*, i. 1. 154, and *Hamlet*, i. 5. 127.

101 *Her chamber window entered.* As a matter of fact what Claudio does see is Borachio talking at the window with Margaret. Cf. Claudio's question to Hero in act iv. 1. 84, 85.

105 *May this be so.* Claudio takes the blow quite calmly; indeed it is scarcely a blow for his feeble, shallow nature. At best he expresses only a mild incredulity in his question. Don Pedro, on the other hand, roundly refuses to believe the story. The contrast is an effective piece of characterisation.

Scene 3.

I feel sure that in writing these Dogberry and Verges scenes Shakespeare had in his mind's eye one of Lyly's comedies; viz., *Endimion.* (iv. 2.) Lyly's work is crude and incomplete; but I believe that he furnished the prototypes of the immortal constables. It would be easy to show from other places how familiar Shakespeare was with the works of his contemporary. For a single example take the beautiful "Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings." (*Cymbeline*, ii. 3. 21; and *Sonnet* 29); it was "conveyed" from *Campaspe*, v. 1. I have not thought it necessary to note the magnificent Malapropisms scattered up and down the scene. Who runs may read.

Dogberry and Verges. "Dogberry occurs as a surname in a charter of the time of Richard II., and Verges as that of a usurer in *MS. Ashmol*, 38, where this epitaph is given: 'Here lyes father *Verges*, who died to save charges.'" (HALLIWELL, quoted by Mr. Marshall.) *Verges* is a vulgarism for *verjuice.* *Dogberry* appears to be the name of a shrub. The order of seniority is—Dogberry, Verges (Headborough, to give him his official title), and Seacole, appointed (*pro hac vice*) "constable of the watch" for the night. The stage-directions in the scenes where they appear are rather confused, an unimportant matter for us.

10 *George Seacole.* Halliwell thinks that we should read *Francis*, identifying the watchman here with the Seacole in

scene 5, who was to bring "his pen and inkhorn to the gaol." Perhaps, however, the Seacole family was numerous and fertile of dignified and accomplished officials.

13 *Well-favour'd.* 'Good-looking.'

40 *Bills.* "A kind of pike or halbert . . . the usual weapon of watchmen." (NARES.)

50 *Meddle or make.* So *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 1. 14, "I 'll not meddle nor make."

55 *They that touch.* An old saying, found in *Ecclesiasticus* xiii. 1, "He that toucheth pitch, shall be defiled with it." Shakespeare refers to the proverb in 1 *Henry IV.* ii. 4. 455, and *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 3.

74 *Statues.* An intentional blunder, which the later Folios needlessly correct to *statutes*.

84 *Till two.* When they would go off duty.

88 *Coil.* 'Fuss,' 'bother.' A Celtic word.

98 *Pent-house.* 'A shed, sloping out from the main building.'

99 *Like a true drunkard.* A quibble on his own name, which seems to have meant 'drunkard.'

104 *Any villany.* Some editors change to *villain;* needlessly, I think.

109 *Unconfirm'd.* 'Inexperienced.'

112 *Apparel.* Which "oft proclaims the man," *Hamlet*, i. 3. 72.

121 *Vane. Rain* has been suggested, quite needlessly.

125 *Pharaoh's soldiers.* As they crossed the Red Sea.

Reechy. 'Smoke-stained,' 'grimy.' So *Coriolanus*, ii. 1. 225. Scotchmen speak of Edinburgh as "Auld Reekie."

126 *God Bel.* Alluding to the story of Bel and the Dragon. Mr. Marshall quotes the *Scornful Lady*, iv. 1, "You look like one of Ball's priests in a hanging."

127 *Shaven Hercules.* Why shaven? The editors have no explanation. Generally the subjects depicted in these tapestry hangings (or "painted cloths," as they are often called; *e.g.* in *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 290; *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 10. 47; *Lucrece*, 245, &c.) were Biblical. Thus the story of the prodigal was a great favourite (2 *Henry IV.* ii. 1. 156, and *Merry Wives*, iv. 5. 9), and Lazarus was not forgotten. (1 *Henry IV.* iv. 2. 24.)

144 *Possess'd.* 'Influenced.'

158 *A' wears a lock.* It was considered modish to wear a long lock of hair, tied with ribbons, and fastened in some mysterious manner under the left ear. Allusions to these "love-locks" are frequent.

163 *Never speak.* Assigned to Conrade in the Quarto and Folios; wrongly, as Theobald first pointed out.

165 *A goodly commodity.* 'A valuable bargain.' *Commodity*, "that smooth-faced gentleman," is a vague word, equivalent, perhaps, to 'interest,' 'profit,' as in *King John*, ii. 1. 573–87.

In the *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 3. 27, the sense seems to be 'traffic.'

166 *Being taken up*, &c. *To take up*, besides its obvious meaning, 'to arrest,' also signified 'to get goods on credit,' and *bills* in commerce were bonds for payment; so that the speech is all a piece of word-quibbling. For "take up" cf. 2 *Henry VI.* iv. 7. 135; and for much the same sort of pun on "bills" see *As You Like It*, i. 2. 131.

167 *In question.* 'Under judicial enquiry.' So 2 *Henry IV.* i. 2. 68–69, "He that was in question for the robbery." Conrade means, that having been arrested they will have to stand their trial.

Scene 4.

6 *Rabato.* The *rabato* (or *rebato*, from Old French *rebatre*) was a kind of collar or ruff, such as we see in portraits of the period. It was kept in its place by means of stiff wires, and these wires were sometimes called *rabatos*, though Autolycus preferred the old-fashioned title, "poking-sticks of steel," *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 228.

12 *Tire.* 'Head-dress.' "Tire of Venetian admittance" (fashion), *Merry Wives*, iii. 3. 61.

16 *That exceeds.* 'Is fine beyond words.' Cf. use of "passing" to signify anything very remarkable.

17 *Night-gown.* 'Dressing-gown.'

18 *Cuts.* The edges of the dress shaped so as to fall gracefully.

19 *Side sleeves.* Worn over the ordinary sleeve, and made so long as to touch the ground. Even men affected them.

20 *Underborne.* 'Trimmed.' Only here in this sense; elsewhere, *e.g. John* iii. 1. 65, *underbear* = 'endure.'

Tinsel. 'Bright trimming with silver in it.' French, *étincelle;* Latin, *scintilla.* The word suggested anything that had a silvery, flashing surface. So Herrick speaks of a moonbeam "tinselling the streams;" and *tinsel-slipper'd* is Milton's epithet for Thetis, whom Homer had described as *silver-footed.* See *Comus*, 877.

Quaint. 'Dainty.' Really from *cognitus*, but confused with *comptus.* O.F. *coint*, "quaint, compt, neat, fine." (COTGRAVE.)

29 "*Saving your reverence, a husband.*" The Globe Edition, following Quarto and Folios, treats the whole passage as a quotation, and rightly. Hero (her maid implies) was so prudish, that the very mention of the word *husband* required an apology. In most editions only *a husband* is placed between marks of quotations.

30 *Wrest.* 'Misinterpret.' "This ill-wresting world," *Sonnet* 140.

39 *Clap us into.* 'Let us begin.' "Shall we clap into 't roundly?" *As You Like It*, v. 3. 11.

Light o' love. A favourite old song often referred to. Cf. the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, i. 2. 83-85. The original words have been lost; the music is given in Chappell's *Popular Music*, p. 222.

40 *Without a burden.* This agrees with the above-noted passage in the *Two Gentlemen*. "The burden of a song, in the old acceptation of the word, was the base, foot or undersong. It was sung throughout, and not merely at the end of the verse," *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, p. 222. Chaucer uses the word in its strict sense—

"This Sompnour bar to him a stif burdoun,
Was never trompe of half so gret a soun."

From French *bourdon*, 'a drone-bee,' 'humming of bees,' 'drone of a bag-pipe;' probably of imitative origin. (SKEAT.)

43 *No barns.* Meaning *bairns* ('children'). Perdita in the *Winter's Tale*, iii. 3. 70, is "a barne; a very pretty barne." The Middle English form of *bairn* was *barn;* hence the joke was more obvious then. *Bairn* = 'that which is born;' same root as *φέρειν*, *fero.*

44 *Construction.* 'Interpretation.'

45 *With my heels.* A way of showing contempt. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 2. 33. Obviously Margaret refers to the first part of Beatrice's speech.

46 *Five o'clock.* As far as I know, this is quite the most matutinal marriage in Shakespeare.

49 *For the letter.* A quibble on H and *ache*, the latter having been pronounced *aitch.* For *aches* (the substantive) as a dissyllable cf. *Tempest*, i. 2. 370, "Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar;" and *Timon of Athens*, i. 1. 257, "Aches contract and starve your supple joints." Curiously enough the verb was pronounced as now. Cf. *Comedy of Errors*, iii. 1. 58. One of Heywood's *Epigrams* says—

"*H* is worst among letters in the crossrow (alphabet),
For if thou find him either in thine elbow,
In thy arm, or leg, in any degree;
In thine head, or teeth, or toe, or knee;
Into what place soever *H* may pike him,
Wherever thou find *ache* thou shalt not like him."

50 *Turn'd Turk.* 'Changed utterly;' *i.e.* 'become a convert to love.' The phrase is not uncommon. Cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 2. 287, and *Othello*, ii. 2. 170, where the quibble is clear. I find it in one of Sedley's comedies, *Bellamira*, iv. 6, "I will turn Turk, but I will avoid wine hereafter." It always means 'to change completely.'

51 *The star.* The Polestar, beautifully described elsewhere

as "The star to every wandering bark," *Sonnet* 116. So Fletcher, in the *Faithful Shepherdess*, i. 2, speaks of—

"That fair star
That guides the wandering seaman through the deep."

Compare *Julius Cæsar*, iii. 1. 60. *By* = 'according to.'

56 *Perfume.* Nares quotes several passages which show that it was a regular practice to scent gloves. Autolycus, in the *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 222, has "Gloves as sweet as damask roses."

60 *Apprehension.* 'Cleverness,' 'wit;' not 'fear,' as now. Compare ii. 1. 84, "You apprehend shrewdly."

65 *Carduus Benedictus.* Thought at one time to be "a sovereign aid" in all sorts of ailments; especially potent "to expel any evil symptom from the heart;" hence appropriately mentioned here. According to Ellacombe, the blessed thistle was "supposed even to cure the plague, which was the highest praise that could be given to a medicine in those days."

70 *Moral.* 'Hidden meaning.' *Moralise*, the verb, often signifies 'to explain the meaning,' 'interpret.' Cf. *As You Like It*, ii. 1. 44, "Did he not moralise this spectacle?" Of course, by "some moral" Beatrice meant an allusion to Benedick.

80 *Eats his meat*, &c. Referring, possibly, to some lost proverb. None of the notes are worth reproducing. In such passages of conventional and occasionally coarse sparring some allusions must escape us. We know Elizabethan life well, but not quite well enough to be able to explain every casual touch.

84 *A false gallop.* Evidently a proverbial phrase. Cf. *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 119, "This is the very false gallop." Nash has it in one of his pamphlets, *Pierce Pennilesse* (1593), "I would trot a false gallop through the rest of his ragged (*i.e.* 'rugged') verses." The idea is that of a horse thrown out of its paces and moving in a jerky fashion, or as Shakespeare says, a "forc'd gait," 1 *Henry IV.* iii. 1. 135.

Scene 5.

12 *Honest as the skin*, &c. A proverbial expression. The editors quote from *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, v. 2, "I am as true . . . as skin betwene thy brows."

15 *Comparisons are odorous.* "Every schoolboy" will remember Mrs. Maloprop's "Caparisons are odious."

Palabras. A corruption of the Spanish *pocas palabras* = 'few words,' an Elizabethan equivalent of "Shut up." No doubt sailors who went out with Drake and Raleigh and the sea-marauders of the time brought back these scraps of foreign slang. This particular phrase occurs very often; *e.g.* in the Induction to the *Taming of the Shrew*, line 5. From *palabras*

comes *palaver*. Same root as *parable*, *parole*, &c. Greek, παραβολή.

18 *It pleases*, &c. Evidently Dogberry imagines that tediousness is a valuable possession; hence his flattering readiness to make Leonato a present of it.

19 *The poor duke's officers*. Meaning 'the duke's poor officers.' "The poor duke's constable," *Measure for Measure*, ii. 1. 48.

29 *To-night*. Meaning 'last night.' Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, ii. 4. 17–18—

"There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night."

See Abbott, p. 126.

Excepting. Like "Saving your reverence" in the last scene, 33; a vulgarism that has survived.

33 *When the age*. An unauthorised version of the proverb, "When the ale is in the wit is out." The editors quote Heywood's *Epigrams and Proverbs*—

"When ale is in, wit is out;
When ale is out, wit is in.
The first thou showest out of doubt,
The last in thee hath not bin."

34 *It is a world*. Perhaps a proverbial saying. "It is a world to hear their presumption," Bernard's *Translation of Terence*, 1598; quoted in the New Shakspere Society's papers (1875–1876), p. 460. Compare *Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 313. Our phrase would be, "It is a treat."

57 *Non-come*. Dogberry is probably thinking of the legal phrase *non compos mentis*. He has heard it somewhere, and drags a fragment in, to the admiration, doubtless, of his brother-officials.

ACT IV. Scene 1.

11 *If either of you*, &c. A partial quotation, obviously, from the Liturgy of the Church. Compare v. 4. 29, 30.

20 *Interjections*, &c. Quoting from some old grammar, perhaps the one used by Shakespeare himself at Stratford. It is like Sir Toby's "diluculo surgere" in *Twelfth Night*, ii. 3. 3. The editors compare Lyly's *Endimion*, iii. 3—

"*T.* Hey ho!
E. What's that?
T. An interjection, whereof some are of mourning: as *eho*, *vah*."

As I have already said (iii. 3, beginning), it is pretty clear (to me) that Shakespeare had read Lyly's play.

36 *That blood.* Hero's blush.

38 *Were.* The subjunctive is curious; an attraction, perhaps, to the mood of the preceding verb. So *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 118— "Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiop were."—ABBOTT, p. 267.
Or it may be a case of *oratio obliqua* after the verb of saying.

43 *Dear.* Dissyllable; a scansion very common with monosyllables ending in *r* or *re*, preceded by long vowel; *e.g. where, fear, near, tear.* For a good instance cf. *Lear*, i. 4. 297—
"Hear, Ná | ture, hé | ar, dé | ar, Gód | dess, héar."

Dear my lord. The adjective transposed; so *Julius Cæsar*, ii. 1. 255 (the same words); *Hamlet*, i. 3. 46, "Good my brother;" *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. 200. (ABBOTT, p. 25.)

45 *Defeat.* For *defeat* = 'destruction' cf. *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 597–98—
"Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made."
And for the verb cf. *Sonnet* 61, and *Othello*, iv. 2. 160. Derivation, French *défaire* = 'to undo,' 'render null and void;' so that in these passages the word bears its strict signification.

51 *Seeming.* As Iago says of Desdemona, "She that, so young, could give out such a seeming," *Othello*, iii. 3. 209. Some editors read, "Out on thy seeming!" There is not much to choose here between Quarto and Folio.

Write against. 'Declare against.' (SCHMIDT.) Cf. *Cymbeline*, ii. 5. 32, "I 'll write against them, detest them." Not elsewhere.

52 *Dian.* The type of purity. "Queen of virgins," *All's Well*, i. 3. 120; "Fresh as Dian's visage," *Othello*, iii. 3. 387.

56 *Wide; i.e.* 'of the mark.' Cf. *Lear*, iv. 7. 50, "Still, far wide."

57 *Sweet prince.* Some editors assign the speech to Claudio, against the authority of Quarto and Folios.

62 *Nuptial.* Shakespeare prefers the singular to the plural form. So *funeral* in many passages; very rarely *funerals*.

68 *Kindly.* 'Natural.' See note on *kind*, i. 1. 25, and compare 2 *Henry IV.* iv. 5. 84, "Washing with kindly tears his gentle cheeks." So in the Litany, "Kindly fruits of the earth;" *Unkindly*, in *Paradise Lost*, iii. 456, "Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixt;" and *Hamlet's* "Kindless villain." (ii. 2. 609.)

76 *Itself.* 'Herself;' but the pronoun is curious. The editors compare *Cymbeline*, iii. 4. 160, "Woman its pretty self."

86 *Liberal.* 'Licentious.' To whom Borachio has made the confession, or when, does not appear.

87 *Encounters.* 'Meetings.'

95 *If half thy outward graces*, &c. A favourite thought with Shakespeare, that beauty of the face should be answered by beauty of the soul. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 399–404, and *Sonnet* 94.

99 *I'll lock up*, &c. As a matter of fact Claudio does nothing of the sort. In act v. he is quite ready to marry Hero's substitute.

102 *Gracious.* 'Attractive,' 'that finds favour.'

123 *On the rearward.* 'After the reproaches heaped upon you.' *Rearward* occurs in one other place, *Sonnet* 90. 6, "In the rearward of a conquer'd woe."

125 *Frame.* 'Disposition of things.'

126 *One too much.* Exactly what Capulet says of Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 5. 166–168.

135 *Was to myself not mine.* 'Lost all sense of self in my love for her.'

153–156 I have adopted the arrangement proposed by the Cambridge editors. They think that something has dropped out of the text after *course of fortune*, leaving the Friar's first sentence incomplete. As usually printed the passage stands—

> "Hear me a little;
> For I have only silent been so long,
> And given way unto this course of fortune,
> By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
> A thousand . . ."

That is, *by noting*='in consequence of my noting,' gives the Friar's reason for his silence: "I have been silent because I have been observing." I much prefer the first way of taking the lines, which, by the way, are printed as prose in the Quarto and first Folio.

153 *Course of fortune.* 'Course of events.'

162 *Experimental seal.* 'The seal of experience;' an instance of adjective and substantive=compound substantive. Schmidt gives a number of parallels; *e.g.*—to take a single example—"A partial slander"='reproach of partiality,' *Richard II.* i. 3. 241. Compare, too, the present play, v. 1. 24, "Preceptial medicine"='the medicine of precepts.'

Doth. Singular, although the antecedent, *observations*, is plural; but the relative in Shakespeare is hopelessly irregular. Abbott has a long list of parallel passages—pp. 167, 168. Some editors, quite needlessly, emend to *observation.*

164 *Reverence.* 'Dignity as an old man.'

177 *Prove.* Conditional. "If you can prove, then refuse me," &c.

181 *Misprision.* 'Mistake.' Cf. *méprende*, *méprise.* Old French, *mes*, 'badly,' 'ill;' and Low Latin *prensionem.* Cf. *Sonnet* 87, 11. 12—

> "So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
> Comes home again."

Misprision='contempt,' is a separate word, in which the second half comes from *pretium*, *pretiare* (Low Latin). We have it in

All's Well, ii. 3. 159, "Vile misprision;" and the verb in *As You Like It*, i. 1. 177, "I am altogether misprised"=*méprisé*.

182 *Bent.* 'Inclination.' "Bent of love," *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 2. 143. See note on ii. 3. 207.

184 *Practice.* 'Plot,' 'contrivance.' So "unhatched practice" in *Othello*, iii. 4. 141.

Lives. 'Lies,' which Sidney Walker would read. The change is not necessary. Shakespeare often uses *to live* as an equivalent of *to be*.

190 *Eat.* Using the past tense to avoid possible confusion with infinitive termination. Cf. 2 *Henry IV.* iv. 5. 165. So *smit* for *smitten*, *strove* for *striven*, *drove* for *driven*, &c. (ABBOTT, p. 244.)

191 *Havoc.* The same word, apparently, as A.S. *hafoc*, 'a hawk.' The hawk being a bird of prey, the connection is fairly obvious. "Cry havoc" is certainly a term from falconry. (*Julius Cæsar*, iii. 1. 273.

193 *Kind.* 'Way.' Cf. ii. 1. 58. The rhyme is rather awkward. Capell proposed *cause*.

201 *Ostentation.* Five syllables. The termination *-tion*, especially if preceded by *c*, is very frequently treated as two syllables at the end of a verse; rarely so in the middle of a line. (ABBOTT, pp. 367, 368.)

203 *Hang mournful epitaphs.* Such an epitaph as Claudio affixes to the tomb in act v. sc. 3. Compare *Henry V.* i. 2. 233, "Worshipped with a waxen epitaph," where "worshipped"='honoured.' Sometimes these laudatory lines were fastened to the hearse or coffin, an obsolete practice which Gifford explains at some length in his *Ben Jonson*, vol. ix. p. 58.

205 *Become of this?* 'What will be the result of this?'

207 *Remorse.* 'Pity.'

216 *Rack.* 'Exaggerate.' Some editors, *rank*.

224 *Moving, delicate.* Hyphened by most editors, unnecessarily. *Moving*, 'appealing to the emotions.'

241 *Inwardness.* 'Intimacy.'

245 *Being that I flow.* 'Since I am lost in grief.' The sentiment is that expressed in Milton's *The Passion*, 54, "Grief is easily beguiled." For *being*='seeing that,' 'it being the case that,' cf. 2 *Henry IV.* ii. 1. 200.

251 The scene still continues—incongruously, rather, to our taste—in the church.

259 *Even.* 'Plain.'

287 *I am gone.* A way of saying that she stays against her will. Benedick has refused her request: how can there be anything further between them?

295 *In the height.* 'Completely,' 'an utter villain.' So "Traitor to the height" in *Henry VIII.* i. 2. 214.

297 *Bear her in hand.* 'Buoy with false hopes.' So *Macbeth*, iii. 1. 81.

308 *Counties.* 'Counts.' So "County Paris" in *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 3. 239, and "County Palatine" in *Merchant of Venice*, i. 2. 49. From Latin *comes*.

309 *Count Comfect.* 'A sugar-plum count,' or, as Beatrice adds, '*sweet* gallant.'

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In this scene the names of the actors, not of the characters, are prefixed to the different speeches; while the assignment of the parts is arbitrary and incorrect. The first Folio does not correct the errors of the Quarto.

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63–64 VERG. *Let them be in the hands—*
CON. *Off, coxcomb!*

Printed as a single speech in the Quarto and first Folio. Marked as corrupt in Globe Edition. The most probable explanation of the passage is this: Verges was going to say, "Let them be in the hands of justice" (or "the law," or some such word), and moved towards Conrade and Borachio; but before he could touch them, or finish his sentence, Conrade burst in with, "Off, coxcomb!" and the official command remained an abrupt anacoluthon. That Conrade, and not Borachio, interrupted is pretty clear from what follows. Of course there is no lack of emendations.

76 *As pretty a piece.* Compare *Twelfth Night*, i 5. 30–31, "As witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria." *Piece* is often used in this way of persons; *e.g.* in *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 1. 62.

78–79 *That hath had losses.* Dogberry had seen "better days." So had Mrs. Nickleby, and the Sedleys in *Vanity Fair;* and for such people it is a ceaseless source of comfort to dwell on their past and generally mythic glories. In these casual touches Shakespeare makes us feel that human nature is the same in all ages.

ACT V. SCENE 1.

7–20 The general drift of the passage is: "If you can show me a man who, suffering no less than I do, is calm, resigned, and comforted by moral advice, I will follow his example—'will gather patience' of him: unfortunately no such man exists."

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17–18 *Make misfortune drunk.*

With candle-wasters. 'Drown care,' either with revelling or study, according to the sense we give to *candle-wasters. Candle-wasters* rather suggests the midnight bowl; only that would be an odd resource for the sententious moralist, who is ready to solace his sorrow with "wise saws and modern instances." Moreover, the meaning of the word is practically settled by a remark in Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, iii. 2, "Spoiled by a bookworm, a candle-waster." So that the general sense must be, 'kill care by reading what learned folk have written on the beauties of resignation.'

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20–22 For the same thought developed in much the same way see *Comedy of Errors*, ii. 1. 32–41.

22–23 *Tasting it, their counsel turns.* It is easy to supply from *their* in the second line a pronoun with *tasting* (used absolutely). See Abbott on "Participles with pronouns implied," p. 278.

28 *Wring.* 'Writhe.' "He writhes at some distress," *Cymbeline*, iii. 6. 79.

30 *Moral.* 'Moralising.' So *Lear*, iv. 2. 58, "A moral fool." Cf. note on the substantive, iii. 4. 78.

32 *Advertisement.* 'Admonition;' the sense being, 'my grief is too keen to tolerate advice; don't preach patience to such sorrow as this.' *Advertisement* as in *Henry IV.* iv. 1. 36. In Shakespearian English *advertise* frequently meant 'to send news or warning;' *i.e.* French *avertir.*

35–36 *Never yet philosopher*, &c. As Horace says, the wise-man can do anything *nisi cum pituita molesta est.*

38 *Made a push at.* 'Scoffed at.' *Push*='pish' (which Pope read), as in *Timon of Athens*, iii. 6. 119.

53 *Thou, dissembler thou.* The pronoun repeated as a sign of contempt; so many passages, *e.g. Comedy of Errors*, iii. 1. 10, "Thou drunkard thou."

65 *Bruise of many days.* Almost the same expression occurs in 2 *Henry IV.* iv. 1. 100, "That feel the bruises of the days before." So "all brush of time" in 2 *Henry VI.* v. 3. 3.

66 *Trial.* 'Decisive combat.' "Our trial day," *Richard II.* i. 1. 151.

75 *Nice.* Old French *niais*, from *nescius.* Often has the sense 'finicking,' 'dainty;' *i.e.* used, as here, contemptuously. So *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 5. 250; *As You Like It*, iv. 1. 14; and Cowper in *The Task*, ii. 256—

> "That no rude savour maritime invade
> The nose of nice nobility."

In *Comus*, 139—"The nice Morn on th' Indian steep"—the meaning must be 'delicate' or 'dainty.'

76 *May of youth.* "May of life" in *Macbeth*, v. 3. 22, is the tempting emendation of the Folio reading, *way.*

82 *Win me and wear me.* Proverbial. "Let him laugh that wins." Cf. *Henry V.* v. 2. 250.

84 *Foining.* 'Thrusting.' Strictly to foin='to thrust with an eel-spear.' (Old French, *fouine*). Cotgrave has, "*Coup d'estoc:* A thrust, foine, stab." Compare *Lear*, iv. 6. 251; *Merry Wives*, ii. 3. 24, a fine passage for fencing-terms.

89 *A man indeed.* 'One who is truly a man;' the adverb coming after the substantive, as in *Othello*, ii. 1. 146, "A deserving woman indeed."

91 *Braggarts, Jacks.* Hanmer transposed these words to

improve, as he thought, the rhythm; and Dyce accented *braggarts* on the second syllable, whereas the accentuation is invariably on the first. Cf. *All's Well*, iv. 3. 372, "That every braggart shall be found an ass."

94 *Scambling.* 'Turbulent.' The same word as *scrambling.* "The scambling and unquiet time," *Henry V.* i. 1. 4.

Fashion-monging. 'Foppish.' We have *fashion-monger* in *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 4. 34. *Monger* in such compounds as *ironmonger, fishmonger*, is from the A.S. *mangian* = 'to traffic,' cognate with German *mengen, mingle*, &c. Later Folios *fashion-mongring.*

95 *Cog.* 'Cheat.' Celtic word, akin perhaps to *coax.*

97 *Dangerous.* 'Threatening.' Cf. what Sir Toby says in *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 198–200, as to the efficacy of "a terrible oath, with a swaggering accent sharply twang'd off."

102 *Wake your patience. Wake* looks curious; hence various suggestions, *waste, rack, wrack. Wake* = 'put to action' (SCHMIDT), and Don Pedro means that he will not by argument so inflame Leonato and Antonio as to change their feeling of passive acquiescence into active resistance. Schmidt compares *Coriolanus*, iii. 1. 98, and *Richard II.* i. 3. 132, but the passages are not, to my mind, quite parallel.

120 *In a false quarrel*, &c. Mr. Marshall aptly compares 2 *Henry VI.* iii. 2. 233, "Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just."

123 *High-proof.* 'Very;' literally, 'so as to stand any test.' (SCHMIDT.)

128 *Minstrels.* It is not quite clear what the minstrels are supposed to *draw;* perhaps their instruments from the case, or the bow along the strings of the violin.

132 *Care killed.* Of course a proverb. We are referred to Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, i. 3, "Hang sorrow! Care'll kill a cat."

134 *In the career.* See note on ii. 3. 223. Cotgrave illustrates the present passage rather neatly: "*Donner carrière à son esprit:* To recreate his spirit; or, to set his wits a running, his conceit a gadding, his thoughts on a gallop."

136 *Staff.* 'Lance.' As to *broke cross*, "in tilting it was thought disgraceful to break the spear across the body of the adversary, instead of by the push of the point." (SCHMIDT.)

140 *To turn his girdle.* The formal preliminary to an encounter. Hence recognised as a challenge, though why the girdle was turned, or which way, no one can tell us.

142 *God bless me from.* 'Heaven preserve me from.' Cf. *Coriolanus*, i. 3. 48, "Heaven bless my lord from fell Aufidius."

151 *Capon.* Used as a term of reproach (cf. *Cymbeline*, ii. 1. 25), with a quibbling reference, perhaps, to the fool's

coxcomb, as though Claudio meant 'a calf's head and a fool's cap on it.'

153 *Woodcock.* The typically stupid bird, easily caught with "springes," as Polonius knew (*Hamlet*, i. 3. 115).

161 *A wise gentleman.* Used ironically. 'A wiseacre,' as we say.

164 *Tongues.* 'Languages;' *i.e.* 'is a good linguist.' Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night*, i. 3. 97–98, regrets that he did not bestow more time on "the tongues."

165 *Trans-shape.* As Hero said, in act iii. 1. 61, "she would spell him backward."

173–74 *When he was hid.* In act ii. scene 3. A reference, also, to the story of Adam and Eve.

175–76 *The savage bull's horns*, &c. Benedick's own words, i. 1. 242–3.

180 *Gossip-like.* Properly *gossip* meant 'a sponsor in baptism;' literally 'one related in God' (*God-sib*). It is often used in this sense in the dramatists.

194 *In his doublet and hose.* That is, ready for a duel, since the first preliminary to a combat *à outrance* was to lay aside the cumbersome cloak.

196 *A doctor to.* 'A learned man in comparison with.' *Doctor* in this sense is common. Cf. *Merry Wives*, iv. 5. 71; *Merchant of Venice*, iii. 4. 50. So *doctor-like*, *Sonnet* 66. 10.

200 *Reasons.* A pun, perhaps, on *reasons* and *raisins* (pronounced almost alike), such as we have in 1 *Henry IV.* ii. 4. 264–66, and *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 2. 33—the latter instance, however, being doubtful.

201 *Once.* 'Positively;' and the comma should be placed after *hypocrite*. So Abbott, p. 47. Compare *Timon of Athens*, i. 2. 251.

208 *Sixth and lastly.* The adverbial termination being omitted with the first adverb, as often; *e.g.* in *Comedy of Errors*, iv. 2. 4, "Looked he sad or merrily?" *Measure for Measure*, v. 37, "Most strange, but yet most truly, will I speak."

223–24 *Have brought to light.* What Borachio says is true. The clever people of the play have done nothing to unmask the scheme against Hero. Fate, in its irony, has willed that everything should depend on Dogberry and his muddle-headed mates.

225 *Incensed.* 'Urged.' So *Merry Wives*, i. 3. 109, "Incense Page to deal with poison."

231 *Mine and my master's. Mine, hers, theirs* are sometimes used in Shakespeare *before* their nouns. Cf. *Hamlet*, v. 2. 341, "Mine and my father's death;" *Tempest*, iii. 3. 93, "His and mine loved darling." (ABBOTT, pp. 160–61.)

239 *Upon.* 'Because of.' So iv. 1. 219, "She died upon his words."

241 *That.* 'In which.'

262 *Impose me to*, &c.; *i.e.* 'impose on me whatever penance your invention,' &c.

272 *Invention.* Here, as elsewhere. *invention* implies 'literary faculty of composition.' Cf. Dedication of *Venus and Adonis*, "The first heir of my invention."

279 *Alone is heir.* Although Leonato said to Antonio earlier in the play, "Where is my cousin (*i.e.* nephew), your son?" (i. 2. 1.) In act i. 3. 57 Borachio refers to Hero as "the daughter and heir of Leonato."

281–84 In four lines Shakespeare depicts the character of Claudio. He is fickleness personified; to change from the old love to the new is for him as simple a matter as changing his coat would be. We have much the same sort of careless pliancy in Orsino in *Twelfth Night;* the Duke fails to win Olivia, and is quite content with Viola.

288 *Was packed in.* 'Had a hand in.' "Packed with her," *Comedy of Errors*, v. 1. 219. In the same play, iv. 4. 105, *pack*='band of conspirators;' and in *Taming of the Shrew*, v. 1. 121, *packing*='plotting.'

292 *Know by her.* This phrase, *to know by*='know concerning or against,' was once good English, and is still quite common in the Warwickshire dialect. Cf. *All's Well*, v. 3. 237. Abbott brings together (p. 97) several parallel passages. We may remember St. Paul's "I know nothing by myself." (1 *Cor.* iv. 4.)

297 *Wears a key.* Perhaps a piece of nonsense only introduced for the sake of the pun which follows. As to the *lock*, see note on iii. 3. 182.

298 *In God's name.* Speaking as though he were a professional beggar.

306 *God save*, &c. The form of thanks usual among those who received alms at the door of a monastery or religious house.

320 *Lewd.* Properly 'ignorant;' then 'base,' 'depraved.' Chaucer uses *lewd* in either sense; in Shakespeare the latter is invariable. Milton, perhaps, had both meanings in his mind's eye when he wrote, "So since into his Church lewd hirelings climb," *Paradise Lost*, iv. 193.

Scene 2.

2 *To the speech of.* 'To speak with.' So *Winter's Tale*, iv. 4. 786.

6 *Come over it.* 'Exceed.' Used with an obvious quibble lower down to='marry.'

9 *Keep below stairs.* As we say, 'keep in the background,' and so never get married.

15 *I give thee*, &c. In sign of submission. Cf. our rather coarse phrase, "Throw up the sponge." *Buckler* = 'shield.'

25–28 *The god of love.* No doubt some popular ballad snatch.

29–30 *Leander . . . Troilus.* Types of lovers here, as in *As You Like It*, iv. 1. 98–106. Shakespeare alludes several times (cf. *Two Gentlemen*, i. 1. 20–22) to the Hero and Leander story, which Marlowe of "the mighty line" had made immortal. The Troilus and Cressida legend would be familiar to an average audience from Chaucer's poem, Shakespeare's own play coming after *Much Ado*.

30 *Panders.* Derived, of course, from Pandarus, uncle of Cressida.

31 *Carpet-mongers.* 'Men who are more at home in a palace than on the field of battle.' Cf. "carpet knights" in *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 258.

35 "*Baby.*" Halliwell shows that the rhyme *babies* and *ladies* actually does occur in some old verses, *Musarum Deliciæ*.

38 *Under a rhyming planet.* The old astrological idea that every man at his birth is affected by the influence of some particular star. Special parts of the body were supposed to be governed by special constellations. Sir Toby and Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night*, i. 3. 146–147, both blunder about Taurus.

39 *Festival terms.* 'Dainty or ceremonious language.' Cf. *Merry Wives*, iii. 2. 69, "He speaks holiday;" and 1 *Henry IV.* i. 3. 46, "Holiday and lady terms."

44 *Came; i.e.* 'came for,' and many editors insert the preposition.

52 *Undergoes.* 'Has received.'

68 *Instance.* 'Proverbial saying,' 'maxim.' Its sense in *As You Like It*, ii. 7. 156, "Wise saws and modern instances," where "modern" = 'hackneyed.'

71 *In monument.* 'In men's recollection.'

The bell. That is, 'the passing bell.' "The surly sullen bell" of *Sonnet* 71, and 2 *Henry IV.* i. 1. 103; the "set slow bell" of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, 57. Folios have the plural, *bells ring*.

74 *Rheum.* 'Tears.' "Drops of women's rheum," *Coriolanus*, v. 6. 46. Properly means 'a flow;' *ῥέειν*.

75 *Don Worm.* So *Richard III.* i. 3. 222, "The worm of conscience still begnaw thy soul."

76 *No impediment to the contrary.* The meaning is clear; but the form of the phrase with its double negative is noticeable. We should have expected either "no *reason* to the contrary," or "no impediment" alone. For much the same sort of repetition of the negative idea, cf. "If any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these two persons should *not* be joined together."

86 *Old coil.* 'A desperate row.' *Old* sometimes = 'great,'

'excessive.' "Old abusing of God's patience and the king's English," *Merry Wives*, i. 4. 5; "Old swearing," *Merchant of Venice*, iv. 2. 15. Cotgrave has, "*Le Diable sera bien aux vaches:* there will be an old stirre, hurrying, hurly burly."—New Shakspere Society's Transactions (1875–76), p. 458. This seems, however, to have been rather a slang use of the word, confined, as Schmidt says, to "familiar language."

93 *To thy uncle's; i.e.* 'to Leonato's house,' in the garden of which this scene has taken place. Ursula's speech implied that Beatrice and Benedick were some way off from the house: "*Yonder's* old coil at home," &c. Quarto and Folios have *uncles;* viz., Leonato and Antonio. The change is generally adopted.

Scene 3.

3 *Done to death.* 2 *Henry VI.* iii. 2. 244, "Unless Lord Suffolk straight be done to death;" and earlier in the same scene, 179, "Who should do the duke to death?" It is exactly the modern "put to death," since the original sense of the A.S. *dôn* is 'to place or put.'

13 *Virgin knight.* 'Virgin servant.' *Knight* having almost its etymological sense of 'attendant' or 'man-at-arms.'

20–21 *Till death,* &c. It is not easy to see what the sense is here, and the editors do not lend much help. I think the meaning—in a loose paraphrase—is this: "Till death comes to us (referring to Claudio himself), let the words 'heavily, heavily,' be uttered;" *i.e.* 'while I live I will mourn for you' (Hero). *Death* can scarcely be taken with *uttered.* To *utter death* would be a very curious phrase. For *heavily* (like the ἀι ἀι of a Greek chorus) the Folios all have *heavenly*, with what sense I cannot imagine; it must be a misprint. The same variation—*heavenly* for *heavily*—occurs in *Hamlet*, ii. 2. 309, and there, at any rate, the blunder is patent. A colon should be placed after *dead* in line 19; and perhaps *heavily, heavily*, in lines 18 and 21, ought to be marked as a quotation; *i.e.* as being the words "uttered."

25–27 *The gentle day.* Compare the opening lines of *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 3.

27 *Dapples.* "Till the dappled dawn doth rise," *L'Allegro*, 44.

30–33 *Weed . . . speed.* The first Folio has *weedes . . . speeds. Speeds* must be wrong. Claudio does not know how his coming marriage will turn out: he only expresses a *wish* that it may "speed" well. For this reason most editors have adopted the conjecture, *speed's; i.e.* 'may Hymen speed us.' But Mr. Marshall points out that the emendation is really valueless, because no distinction can be made between *speeds* and *speed's* when spoken on the stage. He therefore follows the later

Folios in reading *speed* (an optative), and changes—for the rhyme's sake—*weeds* to the singular. I think his arrangement of the passage is admirable. *Weed* as a collective noun presents no difficulties. Cf. *Pericles*, iv. 1. 14, "No, I will rob Tellus of her weed;" and *Comus*, 189, "Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed."

SCENE 4.

6 *Question.* 'Enquiry.' Cf. iii. 3. 192 for much the same use.

8 *By faith.* By his challenge to Claudio in the first scene of the act.

17 *Confirm'd.* 'Unchanging.' Accent on the first syllable. As a rule dissyllabic adjectives like *corrupt*, *adverse*, *confined*, *forlorn*, *express*, throw the accent back when they precede a word which is accented on the first syllable. A single example: "Of thy advérse pernicious enemy."—*Richard II.* i. 3. 82. "Thy ádverse party is thy advocate."—*Sonnet* 35. 10.

20 *Undo me.* A clear play on the double meaning of *undo*, 'to ruin,' and 'to untie.'

23 *That eye my daughter*, &c. Meaning that it was through Hero that Beatrice had come to care for Benedick.

30 *In the estate.* In the exhortation of the marriage service the priest says, "We are gathered together . . . to join . . . in holy matrimony; which is an honourable estate." Compare iv. 1. 12–13.

38 *Ethiope.* Used of dark-complexioned people. Cf. *Two Gentlemen*, ii. 6. 25–26—

"And Silvia . . . . . .
Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiope."

So *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 257, where Lysander applies it in his disgust to Hermia; and *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 118. We have already noted the Elizabethan partiality for "fair-faced" women.

45 *All Europa.* Alluding, of course, to the classical story of Europa, as the next line shows. Steevens quite gratuitously suggested *our Europe*.

48 *Seize upon.* 'Take possession of.' So *Lear*, i. 1. 255, "Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon."

49 *This same is she.* Assigned in the Quarto and Folios to Leonato. But cf. lines 15–16.

54 *Like of.* Not uncommon. "Let them say more that like of hearsay well," *Sonnet* 21. 13.

57 *Certainer.* We find many comparatives in *-er* where modern usage prefers *more*; *e.g. horrider* in *Cymbeline*, iv. 2. 331; *perfecter*, *Coriolanus*, ii. 1. 91.

58 *Defil'd.* Omitted in Folios; but metre and antithesis alike require it.

67 *Soft and fair. Festina lente.*

77 *Such.* Omitted in the Folios.

82 *Brain.* "Deep-brained sonnets," *Lover's Complaint*, 209. *Sonnet* was used vaguely of any short poem or song. Cotgrave has, "*Sonnet:* A sonnet, or canzonet, a song (most commonly) of 14 verses." Elizabethan lovers (like Biron in *Love's Labour's Lost*) were notably great on rhymed addresses to their *inamoratas*.

92 *Peace! I will stop your mouth.* Given in the Quarto and Folios to Leonato. Theobald made the change, and added the stage-direction.

96 *Care for a satire*, &c. Remember what Benedick had said in act ii. scene 3 (end).

107 *Double-dealer.* Used of an unfaithful husband. We have the same pun on *single* = 'unmarried' in *Sonnet* 8.

114 *Music.* Many of Shakespeare's plays—*As You Like It*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, &c.—end to the strains of the orchestra; and it was Shakespeare's work that inspired Mendelssohn to write the most popular, if not technically the finest, of wedding marches.

117 *Tipped with horn.* The same reference as in ii. 1. 21.

GLOSSARY

N.B.—In many cases fuller explanations are given in the notes.

A

Advertisement (v. 1. 32). 'Advice.' In Baret's *Alvearie*, 1573, we find, "A warning: an admonition: an advertisement, a counsaile . . . *admonitio*."

Affect (i. 1. 274). 'Love.' "Affected to"='in love with.'

Agate (iii. 1. 65). Agates set in rings often had small figures cut on them. Here used as a symbol of smallness. So in 2 *Henry IV.* i. 2. 19. Cf. *agate-stone* in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. iv. 55. Warburton proposed *aglet=aiguillette.*

Apprehension (iii. 4. 60). 'Wit.' So the verb in ii. 1. 70 ("you apprehend") means 'are sharp,' 'quick at seeing things.'

Argument (i. 1. 235). 'Subject,' 'theme.' In ii. 3. 241, 'proof.' In iii. 1. 96, 'manner of reasoning or discourse.'

Arras (i. 3. 57). Tapestry round rooms. Der.: Arras, the town in France where it was made.

B

Baldrick (i. 1. 222). 'Belt.' Cognate with *belt*, and Lat. *balteus.*

Bear-herd (ii. 1. 36). 'Bear-leader.'

Bird-bolt (i. 1. 39). "A short arrow with a broad flat end, used to kill birds without piercing." (SCHMIDT.)

Blazon (ii. 1. 269). 'Explanation,' as Schmidt, or perhaps 'description.' Term from heraldry.

Board (ii. 1. 129). 'Approach.' Fr. *aborder.*

Borachio (iii. 3. 90.) Proper name, derived perhaps from Sp. *borracho*='a drunkard.'

Bring (iii. 2. 3). 'Accompany.'

Buckler (v. 2. 16). 'Shield.' "Give the bucklers" = 'yield the victory.'

C

Candle-waster (v. 1. 18). 'One who sits up at night,' to read or revel; probably the former.

Canker (i. 3. 25). The dogrose. See note.

Carpetmonger (v. 2. 31). An effeminate man, less at home on the battle-field than in ladies' bowers. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 258.

Cheapen (ii. 3. 29). 'Make a bid for.'

Cinque pace (ii. 1. 68). Old-fashioned dance. *Cinq pas.* Used probably with the quibble *sink a-pace.*

Claw (i. 3. 16). 'Flatter.'

Commodity (iii. 3. 165). 'Bargain,' or 'piece of goods.' For the pun see note.

Contemptible (ii. 3. 169). 'Scornful.'

Conveyance (ii. 1. 223). 'Dexterity,' as of a juggler.

Cousin (i. 2. 1). 'Nephew.' Used vaguely of various relationships.

Curiously (v. 1. 152). 'Carefully,' 'minutely.'

Cut (iii. 4. 18). 'A slope in a garment.'

D

Daff (ii. 3. 158). 'Put on one side.' So v. 1. 78. Der.: *do off.*

Defend (ii. 1. 82). 'Forbid.' Cf. *défendre.*

Deprave (v. 1. 95). 'Slander.'

Discover (i. 2. 10). 'Reveal,' 'betray.' So ii. 3. 145.

Dotage (ii. 3. 201). 'Extreme fondness.' So *doter* = 'fond lover,' *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 260.

Double-dealer (v. 4. 110). 'Unfaithful husband.'

Down sleeves (iii. 4. 19). 'Hanging sleeves.'

E

Eftest (iv. 2. 32). 'Most convenient.' *Eft*, *eftsoones*, are common enough in Spenser.

Ethiope (v. 4. 38). Used of dark-complexioned people.

Even (v. 2. 32). 'Plain,' 'level.'

Exceed (iii. 4. 16). "That exceeds" = 'is beyond description fine.'

F

Fancy (iii. 2. 29). 'Love.'

Favour (ii. 1. 82). 'Face.' "Ill-favoured" = 'ugly.'

Festival (v. 2. 39). Used adjectively.

Fetch in (i. 1. 205). 'Dupe,' 'trick.' *Fetch*, the substantive = 'a stratagem;' *Hamlet*, ii. 1. 38.

Flight (i. 1. 37). A kind of light arrow. Probably a reference to a special form of archery, known as "roving." See note.

Frame (iv. 1. 185). 'Devising.' In iv. 1. 125 ("nature's frame") the sense seems to be 'ordainment.'

Furnish (iii. 1. 103). 'Dress.'

G

Go about (i. 3. 11). 'Undertake,' or 'endeavour.' Cf. iv. 1. 58.

Good den (iii. 2. 73). 'Good evening.' *Den* being an abbreviation for *evening* or *even*.

Gracious (iv. 1. 102). 'Attractive.'

Guarded (i. 1. 264). 'Trimmed,' 'ornamented.' See note.

H

Haggard (iii. 1. 36). 'Untrained hawk.'

Hale (ii. 3. 57). 'Draw,' 'extract.'

Hangman (iii. 2. 10). Used apparently as a vague term of reproach.

High-proof (v. 1. 123). 'Excessively.'

His (v. 2. 50). 'Its.' Abbott, p. 151.

Hobby-horse (iii. 2. 66.) Contemptuously said of any frivolous person; generally of women.

I

Important (ii. 1. 61). 'Importunate,' 'pressing.'

Impossible (ii. 1. 124 and 223). An intensitive epithet, emphasising the idea suggested by the noun with which it happens to be connected.

Instance (ii. 2. 37). 'Proof.' In v. 2. 68 = 'proverb.'

Intend (ii. 2. 32). 'Pretend.'

J

Jack (v. 1. 91). A cant name for any saucy, worthless fellow.

Just (ii. 1. 329). 'Exact.' In ii. 1. 29, "just" = 'just so.'

K

Kid fox (ii. 3. 40). 'Young fox;' but the reading is doubtful.

Kind (i. 1. 25). 'Natural;' so 'kindly,' iv. 1. 68.

Knight (v. 3. 13). 'Servant;' applied to Hero.

L

Labour (v. 1. 272). 'Effect;' *i.e.* transitive.

Lapwing (iii. 1. 24). Type of cunning; known to us as the "peewit."

Largely (v. 4. 64). 'At large.'

Level (iv. 1. 233). 'Aim.'

Lock (iii. 3. 158). 'Love-lock;' worn by affected gallants of the time.

Lodge (ii. 1. 194). 'A lonely house.'

Low (i. 1. 159). Of stature; *i.e.* 'short.'

Lustihood (v. 1. 76). 'Strength;' or perhaps, as Schmidt says, 'high animal spirits.'

M

Measure (ii. 1. 67). 'A stately dance;' used with an obvious quibble.

Meet with (i. 1. 43). 'Even with,' in our idiom.

Misprise (iii. 1. 52). 'Undervalue,' 'despise.' *Mépriser.*

Misprision (iv. 1. 181). 'Mistake.' Not to be confounded with the last word. See note. Der.: *méprendre.*

Misuse (ii. 1. 217). 'Abuse.' In ii. 2. 25 = 'deceive.'

Montanto (i. 1. 28). Beatrice's name for Benedick, as though she had called him a 'bully.' For the origin of the word see note.

Moral (iii. 4. 70). 'Hidden meaning.'

Music (v. 3. 11). 'Musicians.' So possibly i. 2. 2.

N

Near (ii. 1. 146). 'Intimate with.'

Nightgown (iii. 4. 17). 'Dressing-gown.'

Non-come (iii. 5. 57). Dogberry's legal scrap. He probably meant *non compos mentis.*

Nothing (ii. 3. 53). For the same pronunciation cf. *Sonnet* 20—

"Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting
. . . . . .
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing."

We have much the same thing in *As You Like It,* iii. 3. 9, *Goths* quibblingly pronounced *goats.*

O

Old (v. 2. 86). 'Excessive.'

Orchard (i. 2. 9). 'Garden.' See note.

Out-facing (v. 1. 94). 'Swaggering.' "Facing the matter out with looks." (SCHMIDT.)

Overbear (ii. 3. 141). 'Overwhelm,' 'subdue.'

P

Packed (v. 1. 288). 'Confederate in a plot.'

Palabras (iii. 5. 15). A polite hint to be silent. See note.

Passion (v. 1. 23). 'Sorrow,' 'emotion.'

Penthouse (iii. 3. 98). 'A shed hanging out aslope from the main building.'

Pikes (v. 2. 20). 'The spikes of a target.'

Pleached (iii. 1. 7). 'Interwoven.' Used of trees and shrubs so trained as to form a covering over a garden-walk. See note as to derivation.

Pleasant (i. 1. 34). 'Witty.' Cf. *plaisanterie.*

Possess (iii. 3. 138). 'Influence;' also 'inform,' v. 1. 290.

Present (iii. 3. 69). 'Represent.' Not one of Dogberry's blunders, as we might have supposed. Cf. *Tempest*, iv. 167, "When I presented Ceres."

Prester John (ii. 1. 243). The fabulous Eastern potentate. "This Prester John of whom I spake before, is a king of great power, and keepeth a very bountifull Court, after the manner of that Cuntrey, and hath euery day to serue him at his Table, sixty kinges, wearing leaden crownes on their heads, and those serue in the meat unto Prester Johns Table: and continually the first dish of meat set uppon his Table, is a dead man's scull cleane picked and laide in black earth: putting him in minde that he is but earth, and that he must die, and shal become earth again."—EDWARD WEBBE, *His Trauailes* (1590). And then follow some real "traveller's tales." See Arber's *Reprint*, pp. 24, 25.

Proper (v. 1. 167). 'Handsome.' Said ironically, iv. 1. 304, "A proper saying."

Q

Quaint (iii. 4. 20). 'Dainty;' really from *cognitus*, but confused with *comptus.*

Qualify (v. 4. 62). 'Moderate,' 'temper.'

Queasy (ii. 1. 351). 'Inclined to nausea;' hence 'squeamish,' 'fastidious.'

Question (iii. 3. 167). 'Trial,' 'examination;' in the legal sense.

Quirk (ii. 3. 218). 'Stupid jest.' "Yet will some one or other suttle-headed fellowe amongst them pike some quirk . . . whereof the rest will lightly take hold."—SPENSER'S *Present State of Ireland*, Globe edition, p. 618.

R

Rabato (iii. 4. 6). A kind of ruff; also a wire with which to keep the ruff in its place. See note.

Recheat (i. 1. 221). A hunting expression, meaning a particular set of notes sounded on the horn when a pack had to be called off. *Requête*, Old French *requeste.*

Reechy (iii. 3. 125). 'Stained with smoke.'

Remorse (iv. 1. 207). 'Pity.'

Reportingly (iii. 1. 116). 'On report.'

Reprove (ii. 3. 215). 'Disprove.' So "reproof" = 'refutation' in *Coriolanus*, ii. 2. 37.

Rheum (v. 2. 74). 'Tears.'

S

Sad (i. 1. 169). 'Serious.' 'Sadly' in same sense, ii. 3. 205.

Saturn (i. 3. 11). Typifying moroseness. "Born under Saturn" = 'to be of a melancholy, surly temper.'

Scambling (v. 1. 94). 'Turbulent.' Another form of *scrambling*.

Sentence (ii. 3. 222). 'Maxim.' A word of rather vague significance. Milton uses it = 'vote or opinion in favour of;' *e.g.* in *Paradise Lost*, ii. 51, "My sentence is for open war."

Shames (iv. 1. 122). Used in the plural not infrequently; *e.g. Antony and Cleopatra*, i. 4. 72.

Shrewd (ii. 1. 17). 'Sharp,' equivalent to 'shrewish.' See note.

Slops (iii. 2. 33). 'Loose trowsers.' "The Spaniard loves his ancient slop," sings Valerius in Heywood's *Lucrece*, iii. 5. Apparently the German was of the same mind.

Sort (v. 4. 7). 'Turn out.' In i. 1. 7 the substantive = 'rank,' 'quality.'

Squarer (i. 1. 74). 'Quarreler.' The verb several times bears this sense; *e.g. Titus Andronicus*, ii. 1. 100.

Strain (ii. 1. 347). 'Race,' rather than 'natural disposition,' as Schmidt says. *Strain* in iv. 1. 12 is doubtful; perhaps 'feeling.'

Subscribe (v. 2. 53). 'Acknowledge.'

Sufferance (v. 1. 38). 'Suffering.'

Sunburnt (ii. 1. 291). An uncomplimentary epithet as applied to ladies.

Swift (iii. 1. 89). 'Ready,' 'prompt.'

Sworn brother (i. 1. 66). 'Bosom friend.' Cf. the mediæval *fratres jurati*.

T

Tax (i. 1. 42). 'Reproach.'

Terminations (ii. 1. 226). 'Words.'

Tire (iii. 4. 12). 'Headdress.'

Tongues (v. 1. 161). 'Languages.' To "have the tongues" = 'to be a good linguist.' Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iv. 1. 33.

Trans-shape (v. 1. 165). 'Caricature.'

Trencher man (i. 1. 46). 'Eater.'

Turk (iii. 4. 50). To "turn Turk" = 'change entirely and for the worse.'

U

Unconfirmed (iii. 3. 109). 'Inexperienced.'

Underborne (iii. 4. 20). 'Trimmed.'

Up and down (ii. 1. 106). 'Entirely,' 'to the life.'

Use (ii. 1. 254). 'Interest on money.'

V

Vice (v. 2. 20). 'Screw.' French *vis*, from Latin *vitis*.

Vouchsafe (iii. 2. 3). 'Allow,' with an infinitive understood.

W

Whisper (iii. 1. 4). Used transitively. See note.

Willow (ii. 1. 170). The emblem of unhappiness; especially of unhappy love.

Wind (i. 1. 221). 'Blow;' as a horn is winded.

Wise (v. 1. 161). "A wise gentleman" = 'a wise-acre.'

Wish (iii. 1. 42). 'Bid.'

Wits (i. 1. 60). For the phrase "five wits" see note.

Woo (ii. 3. 46). 'Entreat.'

Wring (v. 1. 28). 'Writhe,' as in pain.